



Out on Wii™ - 31 August



MySims™

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Wii™ Key Features

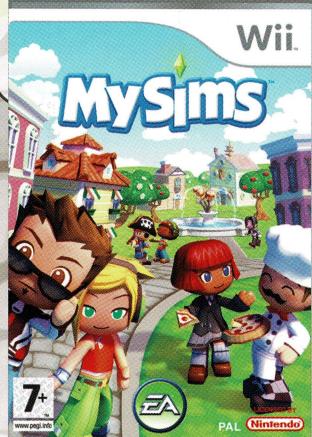
Build and Customise an Entire Town using building blocks.

Decide Who Lives In The Town & Who Moves Out.

Explore An Interactive World & Unlock Hidden Treasures.

Create Your Own Sim Using Wii-Mote or DS Touch Pen.

Design Your Own Furniture, Appliances, Houses, & More.



Wii™ Screenshots



Nintendo DS™ Key Features

Move to a resort town and rebuild it from the ground up.

Unlock new areas of the resort and meet an all new cast of characters.

Create original colour patterns and share unique creations with friends via local Wi-Fi.



Street date: September 2007
Available on: Wii™, Nintendo DS™

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www.pegi.info



**11 Phil Zone**

Head of Sony's worldwide studios Harrison talks to MCV post E3

4 Develop Awards winners

Sony, Sega and Ubisoft and more triumph in Brighton

14 RAB on E3

Our Retail Advisory Board give their verdict on this year's slimline expo

INCORPORATING **CTW**

Own-brand Tesco games to launch by end of year

UK's largest grocer ready to take a slice of lucrative budget market • Titles could arrive as soon as October

by Neil Long

SUPERMARKET giant Tesco is to launch a range of own-brand budget and compilation games in time for the peak Christmas selling season.

market. Last week it revealed that it was expanding its own brand line-up, as well as the number of stores that would stock the products.

Working with software licensing specialist Formjet,



GOING SOLO: Tesco's own-brand games will no doubt have an effect on the plans of rival retailers

tend to jump at the chance," Formjet divisional manager Graham O'Reilly told *MCV*. "It has got to be products that are right for re-badging, more the middle-of-the-road titles or games bundles."

O'Reilly added that Tesco is also considering re-publishing console titles.

"We are looking to partner with a number of companies to extend the range," he added. "We are currently focused on

PC, but judging by the response so far this could go anywhere. We will probably look to expand the range in October."

■ To read *MCV*'s in-depth review of the current budget market, turn to page 17

When you mention the name Tesco to budget software publishers, they tend to jump at the opportunity.

Graham O'Reilly, Formjet

In a move that is set to shake-up the value games sector in the UK, *MCV* understands that Tesco will introduce the line-up to its stores this October. It follows the grocery giant's success in the non-games software

Tesco has already set the wheels in motion to release the new range of games as soon as October.

"We've already been speaking to budget software publishers and when you mention the name Tesco they

Now Activision looks for European surge

Dash for growth as mood improves within world's second largest games publisher • Acquisitions possible

by Stuart Dinsey

THE CLOSEST global rival to EA has a new focus on Europe, with even faster growth due here than in the US, and major investment in local IP and development on the agenda.

That was the message from senior vice president of publishing Joerg Trouvain this week, as he told *MCV* about the 'new Activision' that is

beginning to emerge this side of the Atlantic after a period in the doldrums.

Trouvain, who took over as Euro boss in the spring, has been encouraged by the firm's Q1 success in its fiscal year to end of March 2008 and believes that the company is closer to firing on all cylinders as each week passes.

"The US and Europe is forecast to grow 12 per cent by



TROUVAIN: Wants Activision to grow faster in EU than the US

the end of March, but we want to grow by 19 per cent. That would take us to \$1.8 billion. And in doing so, Europe will grow faster than the US. We've already done that in our Q1," said Trouvain.

Activision is following up the success of *Spider-Man 3*, *Shrek 3* and *Transformers* with blockbusters such as *Call of Duty 4*, *Guitar Hero 3* and *Tony Hawk's Proving Ground*.

And Trouvain expects more Euro-friendly content moves, such as last year's signing of the James Bond licence and the addition of localised tracks for *Guitar Hero*.

"In terms of IP or games development, there are lots of opportunities in Europe – perhaps more than in the US."

"We are evaluating when we will make our next move," Trouvain noted.

NEWS

[LEADER]

TESCO TURNS SUPPLIER



SUPERMARKETS, bless 'em, have a habit of wading into new markets and transforming them from the ground up.

In games, we've had it relatively easy so far. We have already seen supermarkets' super-low price promotions and unbeatable buying power make them tough competition for the more established games retailers - in particular the indie community. MCV has revealed in the past that supermarkets are taking up over a third of release weekend sales on reliable money spinners like *FIFA* and *Need for Speed* during peak season. But it seems this is only the start.

Tesco's first steps into games publishing could quite easily turn the budget market on its head. The likes of Mastertronic, Xplosiv, Focus and Midas, all featured in our special focus on the sector starting on page 17, will certainly be intrigued by the news, to say the least.

Tesco's first steps into game publishing could quite easily turn the budget market on its head.

Value publishing is already a hugely competitive market. Battling for shelf space alongside more glamorous full-price releases is tough, and to justify their place these companies are offering consumers much more than just a range of quickly-knocked-out games produced on a shoestring. There are big name licences and former chart-topping classics on offer for dirt-cheap, impulse prices.

Budget games' presence in corner shops and other non-traditional outlets has been a key element of the recent success of these publishers - most prominently within supermarkets, which have become key outlets. But now all that could change.

The toy market has been rocked to its core by the own-brand trend. Major retailers like Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's and Woolworths put a huge range of their own products out on their shelves at the expense of third parties - effectively competing with their suppliers for shelf space.

Once Tesco introduces its own range, it's very possible that existing value publishers will find it pretty difficult to get their titles onto their local supermarket's hallowed shelves.

Where a market leader like Tesco leads, others tend to follow. Will we see a glut of similar games deals in the next few months from the likes of Asda and Sainsbury's? We shall see. But for now we're just expecting a suitably sweary letter from Garry Williams in next week's issue. Watch this space.

Neil.Long@intentmedia.co.uk

Develop Awards crown

Sony scoops Grand Prix ● Hetherington named Development Legend

SONY WAS one of the key winners at this week's Develop Industry Excellence Awards, picking up the Grand Prix trophy. But it was just one of 17 different winners on the night, proving that next-gen has spurred a truly diverse industry of creative talent.

500 games development executives packed into the Metropole Hotel in Brighton on Wednesday, July 25th to see games like Evolution's *MotorStorm* (PS3) and Zoe Mode's *Crush* (PSP) take home prizes for new IP, Rare awarded a Visual Arts prize and technology firm Havok named as best tools provider.

Stalwarts and newcomers alike were awarded double-whammies; Traveller's Tales won the Best Independent Developer award for the third year running and scored Best Use of a Licence for *Lego Star Wars II*, whilst Realtime Worlds was awarded Best New Studio



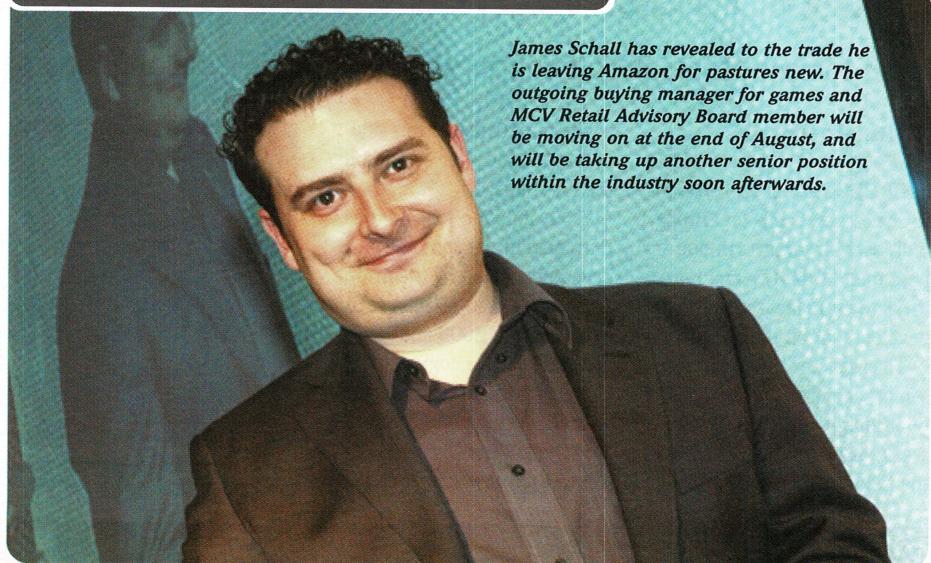
and picked up the Innovation prize for its bestselling debut game *Crackdown*.

Other big winners were Sega - named as the development sector's Publishing Hero - and Ubisoft's network of studios in France, named as Best In-House Developer.

The fact that no single company dominated this year shows the range of talent the industry boasts.

Michael French, Develop

AMAZON SUPREMO ON THE MOVE



James Schall has revealed to the trade he is leaving Amazon for pastures new. The outgoing buying manager for games and MCV Retail Advisory Board member will be moving on at the end of August, and will be taking up another senior position within the industry soon afterwards.

NEWS

industry greats

as 500 execs celebrate at Brighton Metropole



EXCELLENCE AS STANDARD:
This year's Develop Industry Excellence Awards saw Sony, Traveller's Tales and Realtime Worlds pick up major awards

Rockstar Leeds scored the Best Handheld Studio prize for the second year running.

Ian Hetherington, co-founder of the '80s publishing powerhouse Psygnosis, was crowned Development Legend.

He is currently chairman of Evolution Studios and Real Time Worlds – two of the evening's winners – and is managing director of Grand Prix-winner Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. All of which illustrates the contribution he has made – and continues to make – to the industry, as well as the overall range of prize winners at the fifth-annual Develop Awards.

"The fact that no single company dominated the awards this year shows what a diverse range of talent this industry boasts," said editor of *Develop Magazine* Michael French.

"It's been a brilliant year for games, with new hardware allowing developers to really stretch their imagination – so competition for these prestigious awards has been fiercer than ever. Whilst the winners and the finalists will grab the headlines, everyone in development should be applauded for continuing to broaden the market."

gma@intentmedia.co.uk.

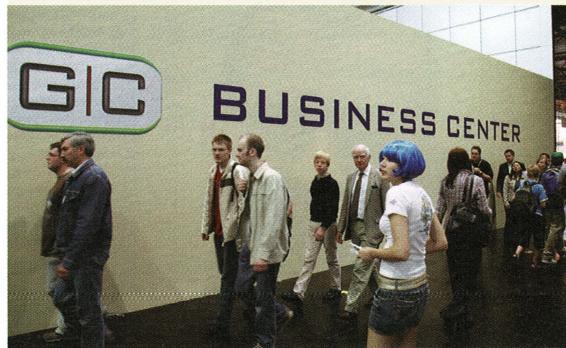
The event will be attended by around 200 games journalists. The GMA Gold Sponsors are Microsoft, PlayStation, Nintendo, Electronic Arts, Take 2 and Vivendi Games. The Silver Sponsors are EA Sports and Koch Media.

■ To enquire about sponsorship opportunities or tickets, please call Dave Roberts on 01992 535646 or email: dave.roberts@intentmedia.co.uk

Leipzig: 'We'll plug E3 gap for UK retail'

AS BRITISH retail's involvement in E3 died a death this year, Leipzig Game Convention now must be considered the vital B2B trade show for UK buyers, says the event's organiser.

our history. In the past, it might have looked like Leipzig was a German show for German retail, but this year we have a complete range of new product for all European markets – and more major



Game Convention this week warned domestic traders that they risk missing out on major announcements from European publishers that will benefit their business.

"The importance of the announcements at Leipzig have been raised to new heights by the downsized nature of E3 this year," executive director of GC Klaus Ernst told *MCV*.

"This is the biggest show in terms of B2B in

publishers with English-speaking stalls than ever before. The announcements and software on show will be very interesting for UK buyers and give them time to make informed orders to get the right stock in for Q4 and Christmas."

The Game Convention will take place from August 22nd to 26th, with a press and trade-only event on the first day.

www.gc-germany.com

[PRE ORDERS] TOP 10



POKÉMON
DIAMOND
DS
NINTENDO

2. POKÉMON PEARL DS NINTENDO
3. GUITAR HERO: ROCK THE 80'S PS2 ACTIVISION
4. RUGBY '08 PS2 EA
5. SINGSTAR 90'S PS2 SONY
6. GUILD WARS: EYE OF THE NORTH PC NC SOFT
7. HALO 3: COLLECTORS EDITION 360 MICROSOFT
8. GTA IV 360 ROCKSTAR
9. HALO 3 360 MICROSOFT
10. GTA IV PS3 ROCKSTAR

A *Pokémon* one-two at the top of the pre-order charts this week, nicely demonstrating the anticipation for this first DS outing for the franchise. *Guitar Hero: Rock the 80s* and *Rugby '08* are also both hotly sought after by games fans.

Week ending July 21st
Source: PLAY.COM



Last call for GMA nominations

NOMINATIONS for the first ever Games Media Awards close next week (01/08), so now's the time to make sure your favourite representative of our beloved fourth estate is in the running – or, to hell with it, why not put your own name forward?

The GMAs take place at London's Soho Revue Bar on the evening of Thursday, October 11th and will recognise the very best across the specialist and mainstream media, in print and online. To nominate, simply email

THE CATEGORIES

Mainstream Media

Games Writer on a National Newspaper
Games Writer on a Lifestyle Magazine
Games Writer on a Mainstream Website
Regional Games Column
Best Games-Dedicated Broadcast on Mainstream TV or Radio

Specialist Games Media (Print)

PlayStation Magazine
Xbox Magazine
Nintendo Magazine
Multi Format Magazine
Overall Games Magazine
Best Writer on a Specialist Magazine

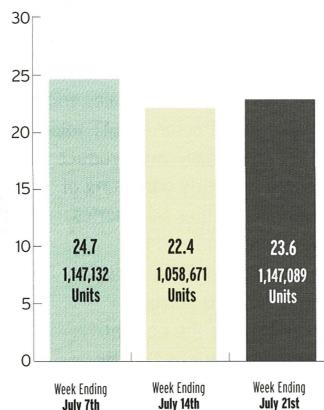
Specialist Games Media (Online)

Games Website - News
Games Website - Reviews/Features
Games Podcast
Non-Commercial Website or Blog
Best Writer in Specialist Digital Media

gma
gamesmediaawards

[MARKET VALUE]

£23.6m



Total UK Software Sales
Source: ELSPA/ChartTrack and Intent Media

NEWS

EUK switch readies Asda for renewed games assault

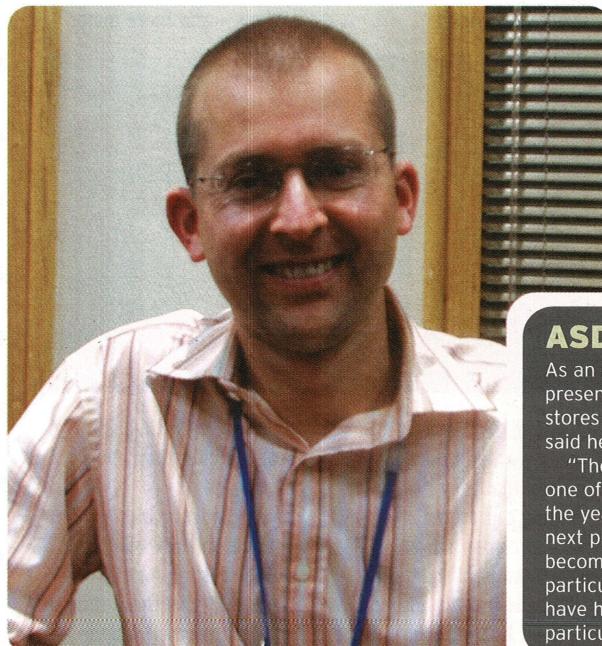
The supermarket has 'exploded' its store space for games ahead of what it is anticipating as its biggest Q4

by Neil Long

SUPERMARKET Asda has thrown down the Q4 gauntlet to its retail rivals, warning that it now has the resources in place to step up its increasingly aggressive move into gaming.

Head of games Duncan Cross (*pictured*) told *MCV* that having established a new games buying team and struck a deal to work with EUK in recent months, the supermarket is now fully prepared to make even greater progress in the games retail market, increasing store space for games and focusing on big game launches after the success of last year's *FIFA '07* release.

"We've already exploded our store space for games and



as the market grows that will continue – we have major plans for Q4 because our games category is outperforming the rest of the market and that will continue," said Cross. "We are growing the team and moving into a new stage in the games team's development. We will

have a dedicated Asda team alongside the EUK trading team. It's not just a case of the EUK team buying for Asda – we will work closely to exploit the opportunities that are presented to us and the in-house Asda team will pull it all together."

ASDA'S STORE OF THE FUTURE

As an integral part of its commitment to increasing its games retail presence, Asda is currently trialling a glitzy new entertainment space for its stores – and plans to roll the concept out nationwide in the coming months, said head of games Duncan Cross.

"The new concept is being trialled in one of our Bristol stores by the end of the year, and if all goes well, it is the next phase of our development. It will become a key part of our strategy, particularly for product launches as we have had such success in the past – particularly with *FIFA* last year."



A4T signs The Simpsons

PERIPHERALS outfit A4T has signed an exclusive three-year distribution deal to produce and distribute a range of The Simpsons accessories which will be compatible on all formats.

"We are a key part of Twentieth Century Fox's licensing program, alongside a vast array of other licensees in the UK," Bill Stirling, sales and marketing director at A4T told *MCV*. "We have two product ranges currently consisting of our video games accessories range, which includes controllers for PS2, console carry cases to enhance gameplay for the current consoles, and our DS Lite bundle offerings, as well as our iPod and MP3 range."

A4T began trading in the UK last November. The firm is



STIRLING WORK: A4T's Stirling claims The Simpsons will storm retail this year, perhaps with support from the forthcoming film

embarking on a push into mainland Europe off the back of The Simpsons range, with ambitions in countries such as Spain, France and Germany.

"The Simpsons characters will dominate retail space this year and we at A4T are proud to be a part of it," added Stirling.
A4T: 0161 727 0170

Re-brand gives Venom more bite

VENOM is set to step up its game in the accessories market by re-branding as well as reaffirming its commitment to quality product.

The accessories specialist has been through a rapid transition in the last few

"This enhanced image demonstrates a new chapter for us," she told *MCV*. "We chose to create the new logo as we felt that we needed to enhance the face of Venom."

"We have been concentrating our efforts into improved

VENOM

months having claimed sole UK distribution rights to the Bigben and Venom range. And alongside a new soon-to-be-re-launched website, sales director Sue Dawson expects the firm to take its business to the next level.

packaging and perfecting our website," she added. "We believe that retailers are finding our products easier to merchandise and display, and some manufacturers are using our packaging as a benchmark." **Venom: 01763 272927**

NEWS



'The world is watching LGF'

Ramsdale predicts a global audience ● Coverage and support to trounce last year's event

by Tim Ingham

AFTER THE promising start made by London Games Festival last year, chairman of LGF Keith Ramsdale has told *MCV* that publisher announcements made at 2007's event will have ramifications throughout the international industry.

And the EA boss has spoken of his confidence that with 'nearly all' major publishers and platform holders signed up, LGF will demand sizeable media coverage – not least because of its deal with dedicated PR agency, Cake.

"I anticipate that LGF 2007 will be a key event in the global games industry calendar and that all participants will use it in that context for any announcements they are ready



RAMSDALE: "We are so much further forward than we were last year."

to make," Ramsdale told *MCV*. "It isn't designed to replace E3, but forms a key UK event on the wider worldwide stage."

Activision, Atari, Eidos, EA, Konami, Microsoft, Nintendo, Sega and Ubisoft have all

offered their support to the event so far – and more big names are expected to follow their lead.

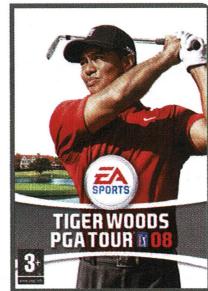
"We are so much further forward than we were last year," added Ramsdale. "In 2006, support from the



publishing community was fairly minimal, but this year nearly all major publishers and hardware owners are signed up to be involved.

Cake has been given the brief that the LGF will be judged on column inches and they are rising passionately to that challenge."

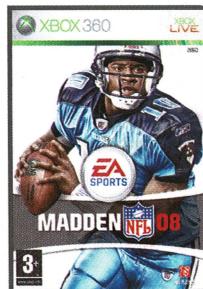
London Games Festival will take place from Monday, October 22nd to 26th and house over 40 events, including the BAFTA Games Awards and the Video Games Live concert at Festival Hall. londongamesfestival.co.uk



OUT 31ST AUGUST

PC, PSP, PS3, Xbox 360, Wii, NDS

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OUT 17TH AUGUST

PS2, PS3, PSP, Wii, Xbox 360, NDS, PC-DVD

Read and React.
Feel what it's like to be a field general making key decisions on both sides of the ball during the game's biggest moments in *Madden NFL 08*

I anticipate that LGF 2007 will be a key event in the global games industry calendar. **Keith Ramsdale, LGF Chairman**

Virgin Play opens Lisbon office

Spanish publisher expands into Portugal alongside announcement of UK ambitions

VIRGIN PLAY has moved into Portugal with the opening of a new Lisbon office designed to provide a more specialised service to the region.

The publishing and distribution outfit says the move is part of its overall strategy for international expansion, coming alongside its recent announcement that it will be moving back onto UK soil after an eight-year absence.

"We want to be able to grow as a third party Portugal distributor and offer better

services to our affiliates, as well as publishing our own projects and licenses," Francisco Encinas, managing director and

this deserves more attention."

Currently the Lisbon operation employs four members of staff handling sales



We have just opened our doors but have already struck deals with the major accounts.

Francisco Encinas, Virgin Play

board member of Virgin Play told *MCV*. "Portugal is also an important part of the Iberian Peninsula and we believe that

and marketing, supported by Virgin Play España in administration, finance, PR and logistics.

"We have just opened our doors, but have already struck deals with the major Portuguese accounts," continued Encinas. "This means that we are able to satisfy all of the territory's needs for our third party goods. On top of this, the new Portuguese office will also be in charge of establishing our name in Portugal as a distributor and editor and will eventually become a leading company in the industry."

www.virginplay.es



OUT 31ST AUGUST

Wii

"If you're thinking about *Mario Party 8*, forget it. This is the definitive party game!" – NGamer

ea.com

NEWS

'Supermarkets can't compete on service'

Virgin claims that when it comes to enthusiasm and knowledge, the grocery giants can't touch the specialists

by Andrew Wooden

VIRGIN MEGASTORES' senior PR and promotions manager Stephen Lynn has criticised the ability of supermarkets such as Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury's to offer an effective games service compared to that of the specialists.

Discussing the retailer's renewed commitment to games alongside the re-launch of its website, Lynn told *MCV* that the specialist knowledge and enthusiasm of its staff is one of its most important commodities.

"The most important thing is the fact we have knowledge, which perhaps some of the supermarkets lack," pointed out Lynn.

"They specialise in groceries, everything they do they do really well,

but our staff and other firms in the entertainment arena live and breathe it, which is a major part of what we have to offer. It's also about range and back catalogue, and extra peripherals – it's about giving the gamers everything they need in a one-stop shop."

www.virginmegastores.co.uk

VIRGIN SEEKS HARDCORE ACTION

Virgin's newly re-launched website is aiming to snatch market share from dedicated games retailers, according to PR and promotions manager Stephen Lynn.

"Specifically regarding games, our range is much bigger across hardware and software. We are also going to massively update our pre-order activity with a much bigger profile on the site, which for hardcore gamers is a real benefit. We've got a roadmap set out for the future, and without giving the game away, games are a really important part of our offer – there will be more exciting developments in the not too distant future."

LYNN: "It's all about giving the gamers everything they need in a one-stop shop"



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Mercury is rising after Jamster deal

NOT SATISFIED by annoying the games industry with the ring-ding-ding of the million seller *Crazy Frog*, Mercury Games has this week struck a deal with mobile content operator Jamster to bring its line-up of other wacky characters to PS2 and PC, *MCV* can reveal.

Sweety the Chick, Nessie the Dragon, Jambo the Elephant and No1 from Mad Dawgz are set to feature as playable characters in *Jamster Allstars*, set for release on September 14th at £14.99. It is the latest signing from the fast-expanding UK based newcomer Mercury Games.

"Jamba characters are some of the most popular in the mobile media sector," said Mercury president Leo Zullo. "Previous *Crazy Frog* games have been very successful and *Jamster Allstars* is the perfect follow-up."

Mercury Games:
020 7833 3524



MCV INTERVIEW

PHIL HARRISON, HEAD OF WORLDWIDE STUDIOS, SCE

'We know what we must do'

Sony's head of worldwide studios talks third party support, Playstation 3's post-launch lull, the potential of that NCsoft deal and the importance of Home this Christmas. **Stuart Dinsey** reports...

Given what we saw at E3, is third-party support becoming the key battleground for next-gen formats?

Development and support for a format is very important yes, and the story is very different these days to how it was with older formats. In the past you could pay a million dollars for a PS2 game and get a \$50,000 Xbox port thrown in. Those days are gone. Developers have to pick their formats much more carefully.

This is partly because of the huge cost of development. But it's not just a financial consideration. It's about strategic marketing and the online consumer. It's about how a game fits its format.

Would you agree that the PS3 has gone a bit quiet since launch?

Certainly the delay to a March roll-out in Europe hasn't helped. We had lots of titles at launch then the summer doldrums arrive and publishers are naturally saving their big guns for when it is darker and wetter.

As David Reeves put across very well in *MCV* recently, we're more than happy with where we are right now. And we're very confident about where we are heading.

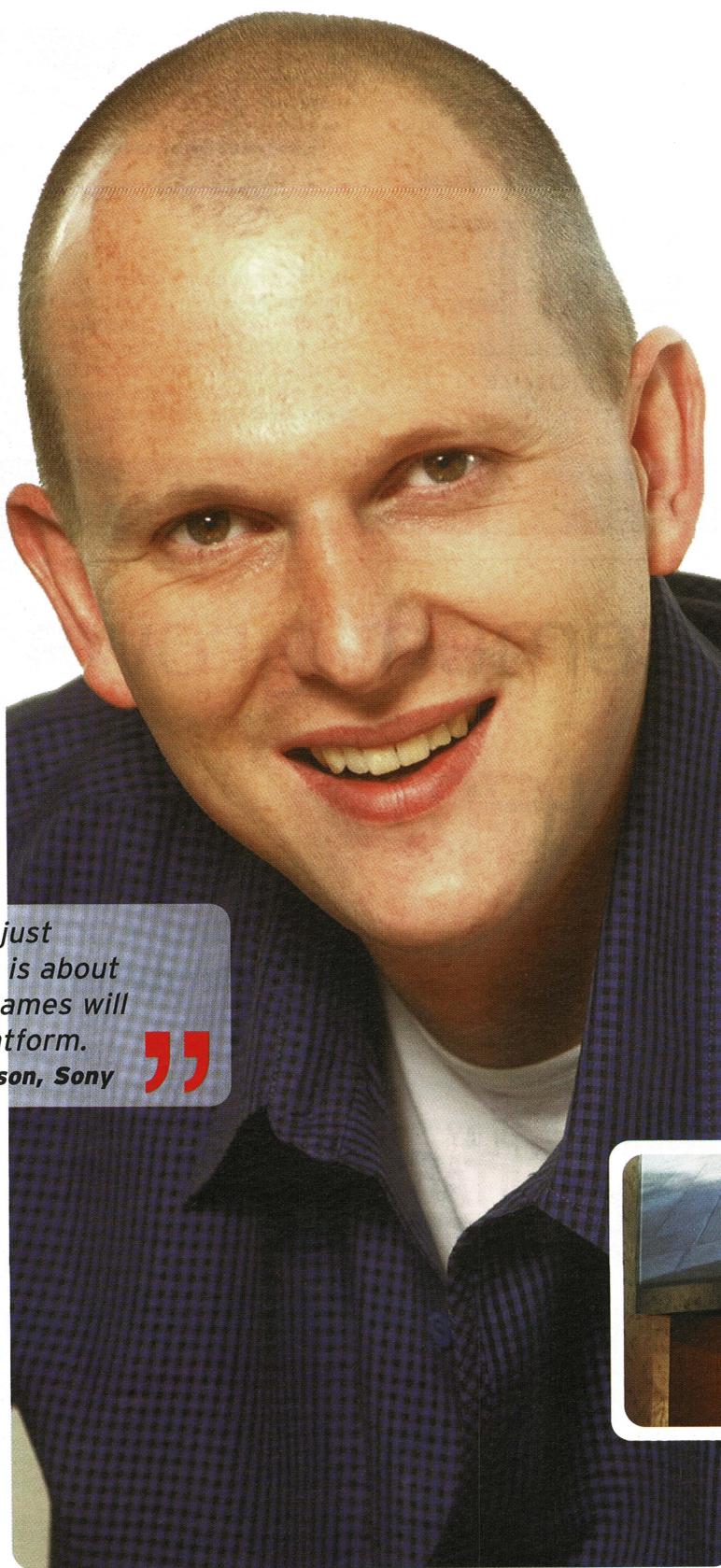
“The NC deal is not just about porting IP, it is about new IP too. Their games will be good for our platform.

Phil Harrison, Sony

In terms of first party software, we have the best line-up ever going forward. *LittleBigPlanet* is clearly grabbing headlines and turning heads, *Heavenly Sword* is just fantastic, *Singstar* is tremendous, *Ratchet & Clank* will be big and *Uncharted: Drake's Fortune* has had a great reaction. Plus there is a little thing called *Gran Turismo* on the way.

How do you see the current position on hardware pricing?

Well, Europe has only ever had the 60GB machine, whilst Americans only ever bought the 60GB machine – which



is why the 20GB was dropped there. There has been a recognition of the value of higher spec machines, so the US having an 80GB machine makes sense.

\$100 reduction on the 60GB is meaningful, particularly given the software line-up that we have coming and the importance of downloadable content.

You don't see us panicking or zig-zagging with our strategy. We're aware of what we have to do and understand that there might be some concerns out there; that's natural. But I would only be worried if I thought we weren't able to respond.

How important is the NCsoft deal?

It's very important for a number of reasons, such as the kind of games they make. There is a very open nature to their games, which is good for our platform. They also generate huge eyeballs.

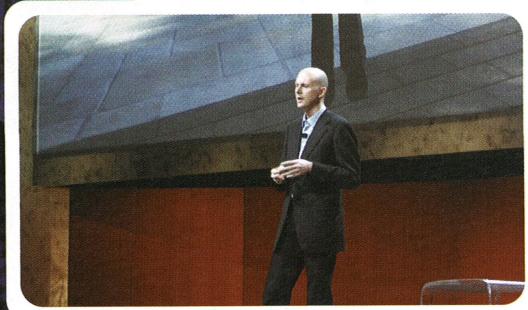
NCsoft is a huge player not really recognised for the size of its audience. Commercially, this deal is very significant and is obviously important for the Asian market. And it's not just about porting IP. This is about new IP too.

When will Home be fully launched and how will it be marketed?

We will be in the final beta stage by September, with total roll-out after that.

This is the first truly global beta we've ever had and everything is on track for this autumn.

Will Home feature in above-the-line marketing? That's not for me to decide, but I don't see why not.



HOME BOY: As discussed during his E3 presentation, Harrison is confident that the upcoming Home service will provide PS3 with another key USP

EVENTS

DIARY DATES 2007

The industry calendar is full of important events. Here are some upcoming highlights...

AUGUST

07

EDINBURGH
INTERACTIVE
FESTIVAL

Edinburgh Interactive Festival
Royal College of Physicians and The
Odeon, Edinburgh
Monday, August 13th - 14th

Featuring the finale of the Dare To Be Digital developer competition, Edinburgh provides a look at the culture of video games. In the absence of E3, the festival looks set to be more important than ever, particularly with presentations from the likes of Chris Deering, Ian Livingstone and Ubisoft's Yves Guillemot.

www.edinburghinteractivefestival.com

Leipzig Games Convention

Leipzig Messe
Wednesday, August
22nd - 26th

This year's Games Convention is set to be the largest to date, with 390 exhibitors. Floor space is set to outstrip previous events, too, with 115,000 square metres of exhibition, representing a 28 per cent leap on last year's figure.



SEPTEMBER

Industry Pub Quiz

AKA Bar, Holborn, London
Wednesday, September 5th

MCV invites UK games retailers, suppliers and media to show off their general knowledge skills in the everyone's favourite venue - the pub.

For more details, contact:
Dave.Roberts@intentmedia.co.uk



Tokyo Games Show

The Makuhari Messe
Thursday, September 20th-23rd

With the first two days of this year's TGS purely for business and the next two just for consumers, there's bound to be some major announcements coming out of Japan.

www.tgs.cesa.or.jp/english

OCTOBER

Games Media Awards

Soho Revue Bar, Soho, London
Thursday, October 11th

Intent Media puts the UK industry's opinion formers under one roof to battle it out for a dozen much-coveted prizes. Over 250 people will attend during the evening.

Dave.Roberts@intentmedia.co.uk

If you would like to promote your event, please email: Tim.Ingham@intentmedia.co.uk

The excitement grows*

* background community quotes from GameTrailers.com



Turn your Nintendo DS into a guitar. Play your favourite tunes, record and compose anywhere, anytime.

Learn to play tracks included in the game from Coldplay, Nirvana, Bob Marley, Amy Winehouse and many more.

Striking a chord
September 2007



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MCV INTERVIEW

PETER MOORE, DEPARTING VP OF INTERACTIVE BUSINESS, MICROSOFT

Say Halo wave goodbye

Just a week after his rousing presentation at Microsoft E3 conference, Peter Moore shocked the industry by announcing his imminent move to head up EA Sports. **MCV** got the last interview with the Xbox evangelist...

SOMETHING has gone slightly awry with Microsoft's media schedule. *MCV*'s one-to-one with Peter Moore has turned into a shared session, with a thoroughly nice fellow from *Halo Nation* being the third point of the triangle.

His line of questioning is, as you'd imagine, pretty focused. Those bloody warranties, he just won't leave it alone.

That, of course, is a hilarious and topical joke. The single track to which our fellow journo's questions are tied is marked *Halo 3*. Which is fine, because we're as interested in that particular game as anyone right now. So, what did we learn?

HALO TO THE CHIEF

Well, it looks "awesome". Moore considers other companies trying to copy the game quite flattering, but isn't worried, because none will be as good as *Halo*. It's not time to talk launchday numbers yet, but it will be the biggest release ever in the wide world of entertainment, including movies and books. (The current games market record is held by *Halo 2* with \$125m on launchday).

This is more than a good headline, Moore insists: "It shows the industry in a positive light – and you guys in the UK know that we could do with some of that right now. Between slaughtered goats and Manchester cathedrals we're taking a bit of a beating as an industry by, with all due respect, 50 year-old editors who don't really get games and simply think they're the root of all evil."

He also explains the *Halo/Star Wars* analogy that he made live on stage and took a little heat for afterwards: "30 years ago, at college in England, I saw *Star Wars* and I still remember the effect it had on me. It was visceral. I would argue that *Halo* is having that effect on this generation. It's something that defines and inspires them."

There may have been some more stuff about weapons, or multiplayer options, but by now we were itching to jump in and change the subject.



MOORE: EA will be hoping the former Xbox main man doesn't stop demonstrating his trademark magnetism

For instance, it seemed from the press conference that Moore has greater respect for Nintendo's achievements and strategies than Sony's. "Sure, because the numbers bear it out," he clarifies. "Nintendo deserve more respect. Maybe they're still a bit weak on third parties – their record has never been great in that area – but they're even doing something about that and looking to address it."

To stop it being a total love-in, however, Moore does claim that the Wii attach rate

is lower than GameCube's was and muses that *Wii Sports* could become a ball and chain: "It's such a good game that maybe consumers aren't inspired to buy too much more software."

The other thing apparent is that Microsoft wants to concentrate on its

current status and imminent releases. More than once he uses the phrase, 'right here, right now'. Every game in Microsoft's E3 presentation bar one is due this year.

"When you plan these things, you take stock of your assets, and when you've got the best holiday line-up in video game history, you don't really need to look beyond that," he opines.

"E3 can involve a lot of gesturing towards the future. There can be a lot of promises made. They can sometimes turn out to be a little disingenuous towards the consumer."

Sony, he believes, wasn't quite as focused in its messaging because, well because it's not quite as focused in its business. He considers its 'price cut' something of a mis-fire, and not actually a price cut at all: "They're still offering two models, one at \$499 and one at \$599, just like at launch – and soon there'll just be the \$599 one. So, did I miss something? When was there a price cut? They need to find a way to get it down to \$399 and see what happens."

Moore, like Xbox 360, is on a roll. He's already laughing about his own mis-firing during his glitchy *Guitar Hero 3* demo. And about the muted response to his holding aloft of the limited edition *Halo 3* hardware ("I wish I hadn't bothered now, it was heavy. But hey, its association with me won't stop it selling out instantly.") As for the criticism from

Buzz developer Relentless that Microsoft's controller for *Scene It* resembles its own peripheral? "I don't think they've patented big buttons, have they?"

Now it's our *Halo Nation* friend's turn to get twitchy. Talk of a controller for a movie-based mainstream trivia quiz is somewhat outside his remit.

But, whether he cares or not, he, like Moore, knows that it's just further proof that Xbox 360 means more and more things to more and more people. Right here, right now.

Nintendo deserves more respect than Sony. They're still weak when it comes to third parties, but they're looking to address that.

Peter Moore

“

TYRIA. NOW THE DANGER RUNS DEEP

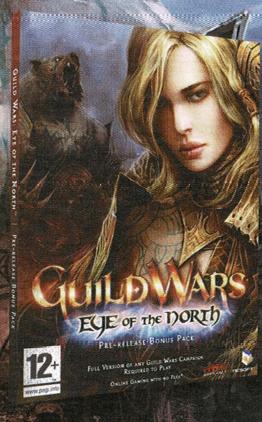
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E3: Retail speaks out

Having been forced to watch the E3 Media and Business Summit unfold from afar, four top games retail executives reveal to **Tim Ingham** their verdict on the show itself – and how the gap must be filled in Europe...



Anna Downing,
Head of Product,
Gamestation

There were no Gamestation representatives in attendance at E3 this year. The reason before that was there was little knowledge about the event in its entirety. Pretty much the whole of the UK market (publishers included) lacked both clarity and therefore enthusiasm for this year's event.

The majority of publishers had decided to put on their own events for Europe or the UK to get across their key messages, so the importance of E3 became less of an issue.

The fact that most of the Gamestation team were able to watch

as events unfolded via the internet would suggest that our attendance would not necessarily have resulted in any gain. However, I do feel that due to its downsizing, E3 was always going to be lacklustre compared to previous years.

Regarding Leipzig, I'm not sure that it will prove more relevant. I think for that to happen it would have to be brought forward. From a retail perspective E3 has always been held in May; that gives it three

“ Due to its downsizing, E3 was always going to be lacklustre compared to previous years. ”

months on Leipzig, three months that are probably the most crucial to retail in terms of planning ahead.

I would like to see the return of the 'old' E3. In my experience it has always given great insight not just into the immediate future, but allows a glimpse into the changing world of technology, to where our market is heading and where tomorrow's customers can be found.



Tim Ellis,
Head of Games,
HMV

The key advantage with the old E3 was setting everything in context. Receiving key announcements and seeing key products for the next 18 months gave us a significant advantage in terms of planning. Prior to this year's events there seemed to be confusion about what it would actually deliver – and with the coverage on various websites we got the best of the news without the jetlag. We feel that seeing product all together has benefits, but in terms of Q4 planning, Leipzig is too late. Deals are already being done and plans will be firmed up prior to Leipzig.



Alex Vines,
Commercial Planning Manager,
GAME

We didn't attend this year's E3 as the new-look event is unfortunately not designed for European retailers.

The loss of focus which a central trade show brings has been a real blow to us all and we're keen to see a European trade show that can incorporate both retailers and publishers for next year.

The ability to see all the forthcoming products for Q4 side-by-side is a great opportunity for us all to benchmark the state of our industry, both for retailers large and small, press, distribution, and of course, developers and publishers themselves.



Don McCabe,
Joint MD,
CHIPS

adjustments to stop it being so German-specific. At the moment, it still feels like a German event for Germany. It's not really aimed at European retail. Anybody who has been to E3 knows how much benefit they get out of it. It was a decent chunk of time spent away from the UK, but it's always been very, very beneficial to us. And even when it comes to adding up all the other

“ We'd like to see E3 hit a middle ground between what it was this year and the year before. ”

We weren't invited to E3 and I think we and other UK retailers might have felt a little out of place this year. There only seemed to be certain levels of the industry there – primary movers and shakers. Next year, we'd like to see it hit a middle ground between what it was before and what it was this time round.

Short-term, Leipzig could never replace what E3 used to offer us. They need to make European

events we've got to go to now, E3 was very time-efficient.

The one thing you really miss is picking up on market trends. It presented you with the chance to get a good handle on what would sell for the next six months and beyond. Publisher events are concentrated on the next quarter and it's more difficult to spot a gem that you know will do good business for you.

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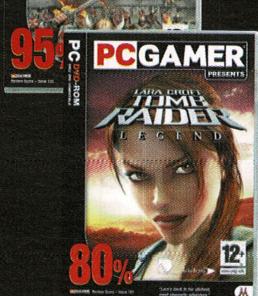
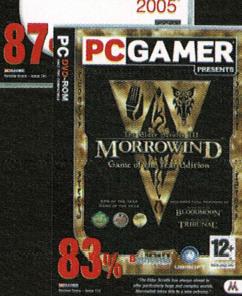
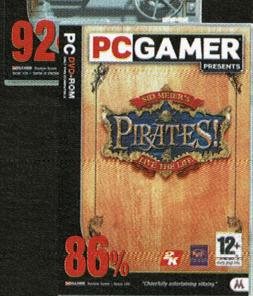
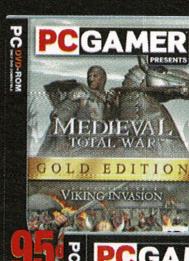
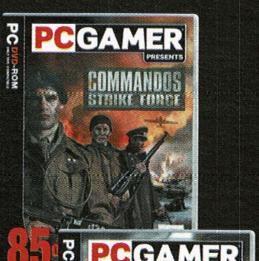
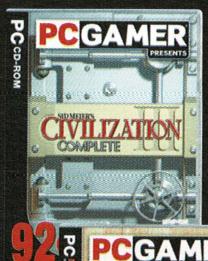
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BUDGET SOFTWARE FOCUS

The price is right

As the summer holidays kick in, cash-strapped gamers and parents everywhere are sure to be rifling through the budget aisles of games retail. But what does the future hold for this particular sector of the market? **Tim Ingham** reports...

AS NEW formats come and go and fluctuations in the market have industry bean-counters tapping furiously on their calculators, one sector that remains steady as a rock is the budget games area.

Having long since established its unofficial home on PC, third-party value publishers have branched out more than ever into home console in recent years, a move pioneered by companies such as Blast, Xplosiv, Midas and Digital Design Interactive – which owns the Popcorn Arcade series of titles for Wii.

"They offer a new wide open land of opportunity for publishers and retailers."

Blast, which predominantly creates value titles for PS2 based on universally recognisable kids' licences, has had huge success this year with titles such as *Little Britain* and *Bob The Builder*. And, according to CEO Sean Brennan, deliberately targeting a youthful market helps to distinguish its products from others on retail shelves.

"The difference with Blast and other value publishers is the fact that we

The difference with Blast and other value firms is the fact that we publish games for kids with strong licences.

Sean Brennan, Blast



And now, with the arrival of the three next-gen formats, it appears the time is ripe for budget gaming to become every bit as established on home console as it is on home computer.

"The new formats are the new frontiers of budget games – they are like our Californian gold rush," says Stuart Green, managing director of Data Design Interactive.

publish brand new games for kids, all with strong worldwide licences," he says. "We bridge the gap between TV, film, kids characters and popular toys to produce an affordable range of games aimed at pre-school and five to 12 year olds. We secure the best brands and create new games that are fun for the kids as well as teaching problem solving and coordination. We also translate the Blast range into 13 different languages and distribute the range on a global basis."

Midas, which publishes across PS2, PSP, DS and PC, prides itself on its relationships with distributors and retailers – which it says helps to keep it informed on what today's gamers are looking for.

"Midas has always managed to select the right products, sell them at the right price, in the right packaging and in the right locations," says sales



BUDGET SOFTWARE FOCUS

manager Sam Collins. "Our stringent assessment of each product to meet this criteria has undoubtedly contributed to our success. We have sold over ten million units in Europe on the PlayStation formats alone."

Xplosiv's dual proposition has helped the Empire label rocket up the budget charts on numerous occasions since it was established in 2000. The company is careful to pick the juiciest IP it can find when republishing for its PC titles, whilst it searches out instantly recognisable franchises on PSP and PS2, such as the likes of *Hello Kitty*, *Antz* and *Ford Street Racing*.

"Our product specific consumer marketing and our distinctive packaging help us stand out clearly amongst our competitors," explains Xplosiv MD James Spice. "Having a range consisting of PC, PS2 and PSP has allowed us to explore these opportunities by providing an overall budget solution to retail. It has opened some interesting doors."

“We have evolved to focus on providing original, family-friendly content based on the interests of consumers.”

Jim Scott, Liquid Games

The 'new kid on the block' in terms of low-price console publishing is Liquid Games, a value label that comes from the Oxygen stable. Backed by the marketing slogan 'Family Price Guaranteed', the sub-£7 PS2 titles have been backed with a TV, print and online-based marketing push since the firm re-positioned its offer earlier this year.

"We have evolved to focus on providing original, family-friendly content based on the real-world interests of the new wave of mainstream consumers," says Liquid CEO Jim Scott.

"We provide titles based on table-top board games, children's fables and so on. We've avoided low-quality licensed products and clones of triple-A titles as we don't feel these offer genuine value to consumers."



Budget companies that publish on home consoles face a number of trials every bit as daunting as their PC publishing peers – and the principal culprit is the oldest in the book: claiming shelf space at retail.

"It's a challenge to secure in-store space for lower priced games in an environment where newer, more glamorous formats have emerged," explains Midas' Collins. "In the main, however, buyers in the UK are aware of the installed bases of each formats and

so platforms such as PlayStation 2 are still managing to stand their ground."

The reputation of value titles as chiefly PC software has largely been thanks to the success of the three major players in that area: Mastertronic, GSP and Focus.

And it's no wonder these publishers have found favour with retailers. They offer stores products with a longer shelf life than new releases, steady year-round sales and the chance to avoid the pressured one-upmanship that leads to price-cutting and broken street dates.

Mastertronic brings gamers a choice of three different levels of PC budget title: the Sold Out range at £4.99 and the £9.99 PC Gamer Presents and MAD ranges. "We have regular high profile releases and a vast back catalogue to choose from and we offer retailers a full

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THE VALUE PUBLISHING PLAYERS

Name: **Sean Brennan**
Company: **Blast**
Job Title: **CEO**



Name: **Sam Collins**
Company: **Midas**
Job Title: **Sales Manager**



Name: **Jim Scott**
Company: **Liquid Games**
Job Title: **CEO**



Name: **Garry Williams**
Company: **Mastertronic**
Job Title: **Director**



Name: **Dave Brass**
Company: **GSP**
Job Title: **MD**



Name: **Grant Hughes**
Company: **Focus**
Title: **Marketing Manager**



Name: **Paul Andrew**
Company: **Alten8**
Job Title: **CEO**



Name: **James Spice**
Company: **Xplosiv**
Job Title: **MD**



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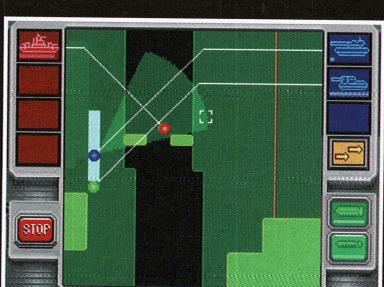


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display solution for the ranges," explains Mastertronic business development director Garry Williams. "We provide retail with a strong and predictable income without the peaks and troughs of new releases."

Focus Multimedia's marketing manager Grant Hughes adds: "For Mastertronic, GSP and ourselves sales continue to flow from our established SRP £9.99 and £4.99 ranges, and we do not see this changing. Customers buying games for a fiver or a tenner don't think twice: it's an impulse purchase. For the retailer to have quality games at a range of price points increases their chance of a sale, and of course a profit."

GSP has won recent popularity with casual-orientated games such as *Holiday World Tycoon* and *Puppy Luv*.

Managing director Dave Brass explains the firm's business model: "GSP specialises in using spinners to maximise choice for the consumer, in a space-efficient way for the retailer. People who come in for something else

'value' ones," adds Alten8 CEO Paul Andrews. "We do not just have value games, but also mid-price ones, and console titles as well. Nearly all our games are new releases, as opposed to titles which may have been 'bigger' titles once but have been in retail once or many times before."

But although these value PC publishers are all striving to distinguish their offerings from that of their peers, they seem to be agreed on the challenges facing the sector.

Attaining in-store space is a constant battle for many, but public enemy number one is an issue that refuses to go away: those pesky 'super-budget' promotions, usually on £1 PC games. And these established budget firms are calling on retail to think twice before stocking them.

"It's a short-sighted way to non-profit revenue, but these kind of £1 promotions can only cause long term damage to the games industry as a whole," says Mastertronic's Williams.

“We already make our games available for download and I am delighted with the sales of these so far.”

Sam Collins, Midas

— perhaps for the latest release — then see a pocket money priced game and tend to buy on impulse."

Which is all good advice for a relative upstart in the world of PC publishing: Alten8. Although the company is set to dip its toe into the DS market with games such as *Mind Cube* and *Cyber Punk*, it is PC titles that dominate its release schedule until the end of the year — and the firm is confident that its offering marks it out as a unique player in the field.

"We are different from nearly all the other publishers in the UK, not just



"In order to extend the lifecycle of a good quality game, the price point must go through a slow, measured price reduction based on the current marketplace."

But whether a PC or console budget publisher, there is still good reason for optimism. Not only do value software sales show no sign of slowing down, but the onslaught of downloadable content across all formats could well open up a new revenue stream for the sector in this generation of consoles.

"If Wii Virtual Console is as successful, or more so, than XBLA, then we will have additional channels to supply content to its target consumer groups," says Liquid Games' Jim Scott. "If such channels are successful, it will be interesting to see if it is price, convenience or breadth of choice that is the main driver."

"We already make our PC games available for download and have an excellent distribution network," adds Midas' Collins. "I am delighted with the sales so far and expect this to continue on its current upward trajectory."

RETAIL PLANNER: A BUDGET BONANZA

MCV provides a guide to the key value releases arriving over the coming weeks...



<i>Kick Shot Pool 3D</i>	PC	August 31st	£14.99
<i>Elite Heli Squad</i>	PC	August 31st	£14.99
<i>Railway Mogul</i>	PC	September 7th	£14.99
<i>Jakarta Motocross Challenge</i>	PC	September 7th	£14.99
<i>ATV Mudracer</i>	PC	September 14th	£14.99



<i>StateShift</i>	PSP	August 3rd	£19.99
<i>They Came From The Skies</i>	PS2/PC	August 24th	£9.99/£4.99
<i>Generation Of Chaos</i>	PSP	September 14th	£29.99
<i>Playwise: Dino Park</i>	PS2/DS/PC	October 19th	£9.99/£19.99/£9.99
<i>Playwise: Pony World</i>	PS2/DS/PC	October 19th	£9.99/£19.99/£9.99



<i>Ninjabread Man</i>	Wii	August 24th	£19.99
<i>Rock'n'Roll Adventures</i>	Wii	August 24th	£19.99
<i>Billy The Wizard</i>	Wii	August 24th	£19.99
<i>Anubis II</i>	Wii	August 24th	£19.99
<i>Monster Trux: Arenas</i>	Wii	September 7th	£19.99



<i>Thunderbirds</i>	PS2	Out Now	£9.99
<i>Little Britain</i>	PSP	August 10th	£19.99
<i>Thomas the Tank Engine EyeToy</i>	PS2	August 24th	£14.99/£4.99 (bundle)
<i>Bob The Builder EyeToy</i>	PS2	August 24th	£14.99/£4.99 (bundle)
<i>Top Gun</i>	PS2	September 4th	£9.99



<i>FlatOut 2</i>	PC	Out Now	£9.99
<i>Age Of Mythology: The Titans</i>	PC	Out Now	£9.99
<i>Rise Of Nations: Thrones & Patriots</i>	PC	Out Now	£9.99
<i>Dreamfall</i>	PC	Out Now	£9.99
<i>Sonic 3D / Sonic R</i>	PC	Out Now	£4.99

mastertronic

<i>Prince of Persia: Warrior Within</i>	PC	July/August	£4.99 (Sold Out)
<i>Championship Manager 5</i>	PC	July/August	£4.99 (Sold Out)
<i>Just Cause</i>	PC	July/August	£9.99 (PC Gamer)
<i>Rogue Trooper</i>	PC	July/August	£9.99 (PC Gamer)
<i>Maelstrom</i>	PC	July/August	£9.99 (MAD)

BUDGET SOFTWARE FOCUS

And the continued support of non-traditional retail channels has also been a blessing over the last few years – and shows no sign of slowing down.

Liquid's Scott says: "Non-traditional channels have been a great help in our success. We get the general impression

perfectly situated to satisfy this new demand. By stocking a range of budget games and racking it well, the non-traditional stores can meet the needs of this market. These stores are shopped in by people who may never venture into a specialist store, but they own a PC."

Non-traditional retailers are shopped in by people who may never venture into a games store, but own a PC.

Dave Brass, GSP

that they will begin fielding a narrower range of titles across all quality levels, so it will become increasingly important to provide games that offer more relevant and compelling entertainment for the value consumer."

And Dave Brass, MD of GSP adds: "The fact that budget games are starting to have wider appeal – to the casual gamer – means that these outlets are

Budget, it seems, is bigger business than ever – and also more competitive, with so many players bringing their own unique offering to retail.

Their mission might be to give gamers the best titles at the lowest prices, but it appears that there's nothing cheap about the ambitions of the UK's leading budget games publishers.



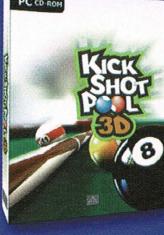
<i>Pet Vet</i>	PC	July/August TBC.....	£9.99
<i>The Ship</i>	PC	July/August TBC.....	£9.99
<i>Trainz Railroad Simulator 2006</i> ..	PC	August TBC	£9.99
<i>LEGO Bionicle Heroes</i> ..	PC	August TBC	£9.99
<i>Crazy Chicken Kart 3</i> ..	PC	August TBC	£4.99



<i>Rome: Total War/Babarian/Alexander</i> ..	PC	Out Now.....	£9.99 each
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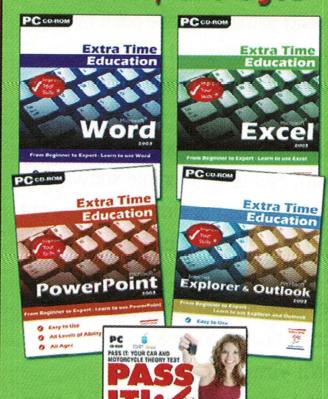


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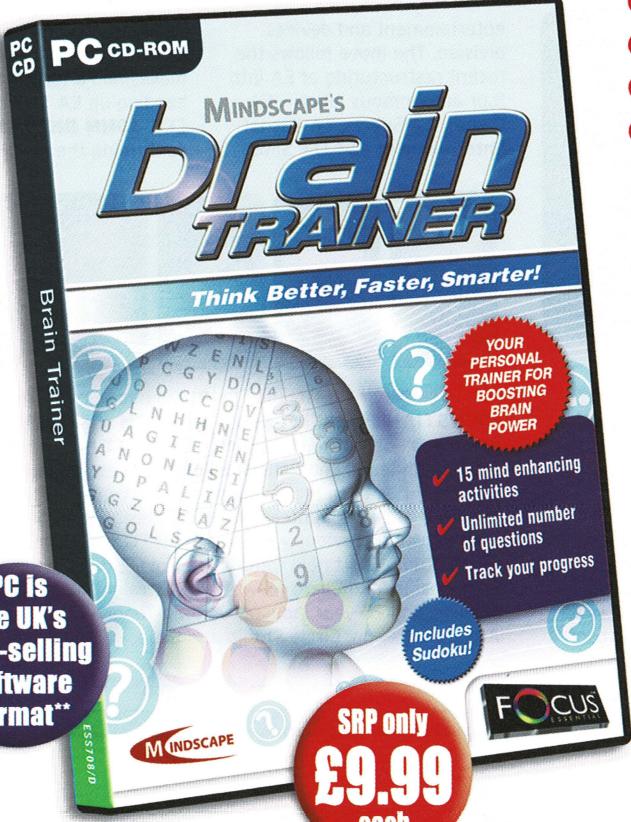
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PERSONNEL

Britsoft firms bulk up for Q4

As UK-based companies Mercury Games and In2Games take on more staff to bolster their operations, there are also major moves at Capcom, Bastion, EA and Swordfish in a busy week of movin' and shakin'...



for producing many of the DS titles at Mercury Games. **KEVIN LEATHERS** is promoted to associate producer after joining as product manager. He will be responsible for developing a range of games across all formats. **NEIL DICKENS** joins the firm as graphic designer from Avanquest Software, and is to be responsible for all produced artwork.

IN2GAMES In2Games has taken on **DOMINIC BERZINS** and promoted **VICTORIA MARTIN**. After working at Sony, Eidos, Atari and Sega, ten year industry veteran Berzins becomes producer, while Martin becomes central marketing manager.

CAPCOM The firm has taken on **DARRYL SHAW** as

senior producer. Shaw has over 11 years industry experience, and will report to Capcom's director of product development **ADAM BOYES**.

BASTION **LEE SKITTRELL** has left the firm for pastures new. However he will not be leaving the industry and will announce his new role in the next few weeks.

MERCURY GAMES ■ NANA PENEMO

has been moved up to senior producer, taking on more responsibility for Mercury Games' production department and product development.

JASON HARMAN becomes producer after joining the firm in 2005. He will be responsible

KEVIN LEATHERS is promoted to producer after joining as product manager. He will be responsible for developing a range of games across all formats.

EA/MICROSOFT ■ PETER MOORE

Microsoft's **PETER MOORE** has quit his role as corporate VP of interactive entertainment business to become president of EA's Sports label. Moving in the opposite direction is former EA president of EA Worldwide

DON MATTRICK, who has moved to take up a role as an external adviser for Microsoft's

entertainment and devices division. The move follows the recent restructuring of EA into four autonomous labels - EA Games, EA Sports, EA Casual Entertainment and The Sims.

"Peter Moore's proven leadership in games and sports makes him a terrific fit for heading up EA Sports," said CEO **JOHN RICCIETELLO**, confirming the appointment.



SWORDFISH STUDIOS The studio has signed five new staff. **CHRISTIAN RUSSELL**, **ALAN SAWDON** and **GARY TONGE** join the art department, while **ANDY WATT** bolsters the production team, and **CHRIS HOWE** joins as programmer.

Russell has been in the industry for 12 years, holding positions at Gremlin Interactive, Core Design and Circle Studio, while Sawdon previously worked at 3D Films, Extreme FX and Circle Studio. Watt held roles at US Gold, Eidos, Codemasters, Core Design, and Circle, Howe comes straight from Circle Studios, and 20-year industry veteran Tonge comes from Elite, Arc, Core Design, Circle Studio and Sega.

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Mercury Games have begun recruiting, and are looking for more positive, energetic & experienced people to join the expanding team.

In addition to working with licensed brands and own IP, the company has entered a strategic alliance with Erlain, a fast growing Japanese publisher. This has expanded the product range and now there are three operational brands: Mercury Games, Turtle Games and The Zen Series.

Mercury Games are now also recruiting for Senior Executive positions as well as other valuable team functions.

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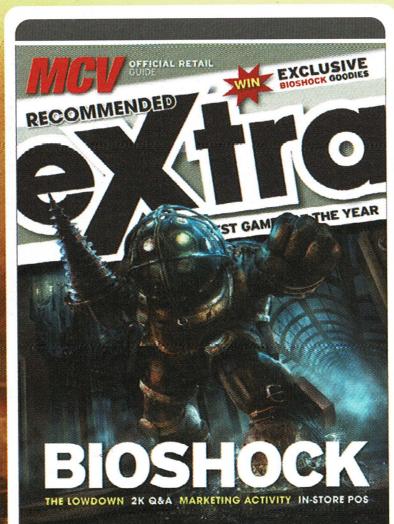
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RETAIL ONLY

It's all eyes on NCsoft this week as the new installment of the Korean publishers' hugely successful MMO Guild Wars prepares to hit retailers up and down the country on August 31st...



WITH THIS ISSUE:

Don't miss the special Recommended Extra on stunning Take 2 FPS BioShock

GUILD WARS: EYE OF THE NORTH P28

The ever-popular MMO gets its first 'true' expansion - we take a look

KING OF CLUBS P30

Oxygen plans to take on the casual market with this golf-themed title

NASCAR '08 P32

This latest racer from EA Sports is on the starting grid and ready to roll

TOP TRUMPS P32

The card game classic makes the move onto consoles in two new SKUs

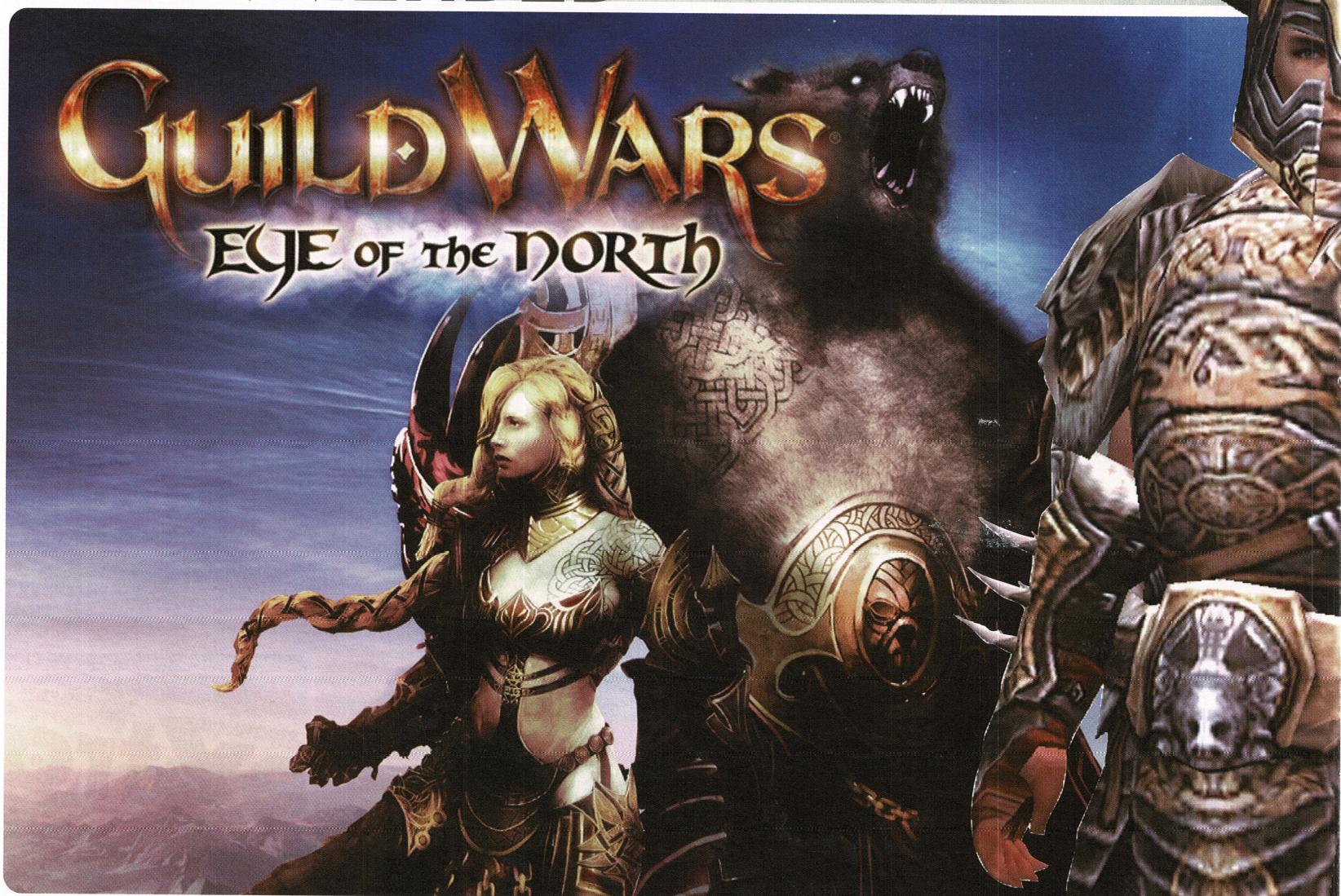
HIGH STREET P34

Indie Store Focus, Price Check and more in this week's essential update

NEW RELEASES P36

Every forthcoming game you need to stock over the next few weeks

RECOMMENDED



NCsoft has high hopes for its new expansion for the all-conquering *Guild Wars* - with good reason. **David McCarthy** refuses to leave his PC for a whole weekend...

WITH OVER 3.5 million *Guild Wars* players at the last count, the first three standalone versions of the game have all gone straight to the top of the UK PC sales charts. So it'll be a surprise if the game's first *bona fide* expansion, *Eye of the North*, doesn't also hit the top spot when it's released next month.

Unlike the other games in the *Guild Wars* series (*Prophecies*, *Factions* and *Nightfall*), *Eye of the North* will require players to own one (any one) of the earlier three campaigns. But it also means that existing players will be able to get their hands on a hatful of new content for a knockdown price.

After two intervening campaigns, *Eye of the North* marks a return to the events of the original *Guild Wars* campaign - the *Prophecies* storyline - adding new, hitherto unexplored areas to the supercontinent of Tyria. "You'll be able to find all of the old friends that you met in the first campaign we

released," says product manager Veronique Lallier.

DEFENDERS OF THE THE NORTH

You'll also get the benefit of tonnes of new features and content, as she continues to explain. "*Guild Wars Eye of the North* will introduce a lot of new

are very important in order to win PvP battles, for example. And we're going to introduce ten new heroes - a feature we introduced in *Guild Wars Nightfall*."

But the greatest strengths of *Eye of the North* are that it builds on the greatest strengths of the existing *Guild Wars* games - namely a non-subscription



*The most important aspect of *Guild Wars* is that there's no subscription fee to pay.*

Veronique Lallier, NCsoft



content," explains Lallier. "We are aiming to release 18 more multi-level dungeons, a lot of storyline quests, and also new items like armour sets and stuff like that. We will also release 150 new skills which are very important to the *Guild Wars* gameplay - people who already play it will understand that skills

model and impressive visuals that make only modest technical demands on your PC. "Obviously the most important aspect with *Guild Wars* has always been that it doesn't require a subscription fee to play," continues Lallier. "Streaming technology has always allowed *Guild Wars* to run on low-end PCs but still to be one of the best looking online RPGs out there, and having just come back





GOT MY EYE ON YOU:
The latest *Guild Wars* expansion offers stunning graphics and environments - even on low-spec PCs

from E3 and seen the latest build, they've upped the graphics even more and yet still maintained the low spec requirements. So the ease of entry of the game is very, very low and of course that's why it's always been an incredibly appealing game to newcomers."

One upshot of the game's appeal to MMO novices is that each successive *Guild Wars* campaign has triggered increased sales of previous campaigns. "What we've seen from a retail and player base point of view is that as each campaign has launched, there's been a huge migration of all of our players from

Prophecies to *Factions* to *Nightfall*," says Lallier. "We even see new players coming in and taking advantage of the updated technology of *Nightfall* and gone back and purchased the older games. When we release a new campaign, the technology streams backwards into previous games."

GUILD-ING UP A FANBASE

And in order to make sure that newcomers will find out about it, *Eye of the North* will launch with comprehensive marketing support. "We're focusing on our online campaign because obviously that's where our target audience is," says Lallier, outlining a plan that will start out on specialist sites like *Europgamer* before branching out into mainstream areas - such as *Yahoo* and *MTV* - around September.

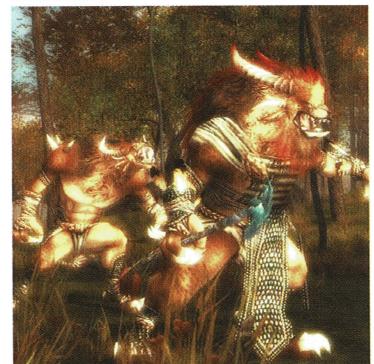
"We're also going to release the platinum edition of *Guild Wars*, which is a bundle pack of *Guild Wars Prophecies* and *Guild Wars Eye of the North*, so we'll use that product as an acquisition tool to reach new consumers and our campaign will be focused on mainstream sites because we want to recruit new users."

There will also be plenty of point of sale materials, such as standees, posters, and oversized boxes - "The normal kit we use for any NCSoft game release," as Lallier puts it. And the game will receive promotion across *PC Zone*, *PC Gamer* and *PC Format*.

"We always manage to hit top spot for a few weeks so we're expecting a very big success," concludes Lallier. "We really believe we're going to have a great performance at retail."

A SNEAK PEAK OF EYE OF THE NORTH

One of the ways that NCSoft is promoting *Eye of the North* to existing *Guild Wars* players is by running a Sneak Peak Weekend the week before the game is launched. "Anybody who has a *Guild Wars* game - be that *Prophecies*, *Factions*, or *Nightfall* - will be able to log on in and access a certain section of *Eye of the North*," says Veronique Lallier. "That'll be their first chance to be able to play." The way it works is that existing players can order a pre-release bonus pack, and then, for the duration of the Sneak Peak Weekend, they'll be able to take a glimpse of the Far Shiverpeaks, and items such as the Glacial Blade, the Hourglass Staff, and the Darksteel Longbow.



LOOKING FORWARD TO GUILD WARS 2?

One of the most important things about *Eye of the North* is that it will allow players to prepare for *Guild Wars 2* through a feature called the Hall of Monuments. "It's a kind of massive monument where consumers can go and save all their achievements from previous *Guild Wars* campaigns," explains Veronique Lallier. "Those achievements will then unlock some items and pets and armour sets and titles for *Guild Wars 2*." Thus, although the action in *Guild Wars 2* takes place some couple of hundred years after the events depicted in the first game, players will be able to save their achievements and start out as the descendent of their current characters. "So people will have to own *Guild Wars Eye of the North* in order to prepare their characters for *Guild Wars 2*, which is a very exciting feature for our user base."

RELEASED: AUGUST 31

FORMATS: PC

PUBLISHER: NCsoft

DEVELOPER: NCsoft/Arenanet

PRICE: £24.99

DISTRIBUTOR: GEM

CONTACT: 01273 872160



RECOMMENDED



OXYGEN Games has described its forthcoming *King of Clubs* variously as a "trick-based action puzzle game", an "off the wall mini-golf-based puzzler", and a "party game for the whole family". And let's face it, you can never get enough off-the-wall mini-golf trick-based action puzzle party games for the whole family.

King of Clubs is aimed at the new generation of gamers: 16-35 year-old sociable adults who are looking for an interactive and challenging experience," explains product manager Philippa Carroll. "We have taken the mental challenge traditionally associated with puzzle games, and created a fresh, really quirky social experience that's perfect for the way people play games today."

DESERT STORM

The game is set in a dilapidated theme park in the middle of the Nevada desert owned by a larger-than-life character called Big Bubba. The action takes place across five areas that between them contain 96 levels, and in addition to the single-player campaign, there's matchplay or strokeplay for up to four players, which will see them each trying to sabotage the progress of their competitors with the help of various nefarious gadgets.

RELEASED: SEPTEMBER 7

FORMATS: WII, PS2, PC, DS, PSP

PUBLISHER: OXYGEN GAMES

DEVELOPER: VARIOUS

PRICE: £29.99 (£39.99, WII)

DISTRIBUTOR: OPEN

CONTACT: 01933 442660

"*King of Clubs* is designed with party gamers in mind, allowing players to switch on and choose from the array of themes, courses, gadgets, collectables, characters and holes on offer straight away," explains Carroll.

It's also, clearly, unlike anything else that's on the market. "This is a game that does not invite direct comparison to any other titles," agrees Carroll.



King of Clubs is a completely new and fresh IP. We're having fun communicating it to consumers.

Philippa Carroll, Oxygen

Nevertheless, *Gamespot* recently reckoned that the game raises mini-golf games to a whole new level.

And, of course, party puzzle games are all the rage right now, which gives Oxygen plenty of cause to be optimistic about the game's chances of success. "*King of Clubs* is a completely new and fresh IP," states Carroll. "We're having a lot of fun communicating it to the gaming and mass market audiences. As you can see from the scale of the marketing campaign we have done a lot of groundwork getting the mind share of consumers for all formats.

"The campaign, the unique challenge on offer, the depth of gameplay and the great history of party games for the WII format in particular, combine to make *King of Clubs* a sure winner," she adds.

Oxygen Interactive's new multi-format golf/party/puzzle game is aimed squarely at the new breed of casual gamers. But it has also impressed the likes of Gamespot. **David McCarthy** takes a closer look...



MARKETING CLUB

Oxygen will be launching *King of Clubs* with a specialist and lifestyle PR campaign and a two-month ad push across specialist magazines and websites. They'll also be targeting online lads mag sites with banner promotions



throughout September, and there will be a flyering campaign throughout the summer at all major music festivals. Launch month activity will include leafleting in city centres and men's washroom advertising, before the game receives a TV advertising campaign in the run-up to Christmas.

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RECOMMENDED

Fans have been waiting a year for the NASCAR series to hit next gen. **Andrew Wooden** buckles up...

JUST LIKE gangsters, stock car racing remained a popular part of American culture after the prohibition era of the twenties when it was galvanised. From the humble act of engineering the smallest, quickest and most manoeuvrable cars to best outrun pursuing police wagons whilst ferrying moon shine from illicit bathtub breweries, the USA's second favourite league sport was born. EA is aiming to tap into this popularity with the release of its latest title in the franchise.

In the game, players take control of a rookie driver pitching up at 2008's NASCAR Nextel Cup Series championship. Being new to

the game, players must hone their racing skills in order to gain licences and contracts from car owners and win silverware. Players can also compete in the NASCAR Busch Series, and NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, and

modify the car itself to better fit particular driving styles. With the PS3 and Xbox 360 versions, the modified cars can be taken onto the online racetrack against up to 15 other players. The customisation of these multiplayer features have been the source of much acclaim from specialist previews, with the 'Modding feature' receiving particular praise.

Players can choose the cars, tracks, race length, the amount of pit stops, yellow and black flags (black flags send players back to the end of the race if they continually crash) and the strength of the computer opponents. This gives the option to create more forgiving races for beginners, while also allowing more challenging tracks for enthusiasts.

RELEASED: AUGUST 24

FORMATS: PS2, 360, PS3

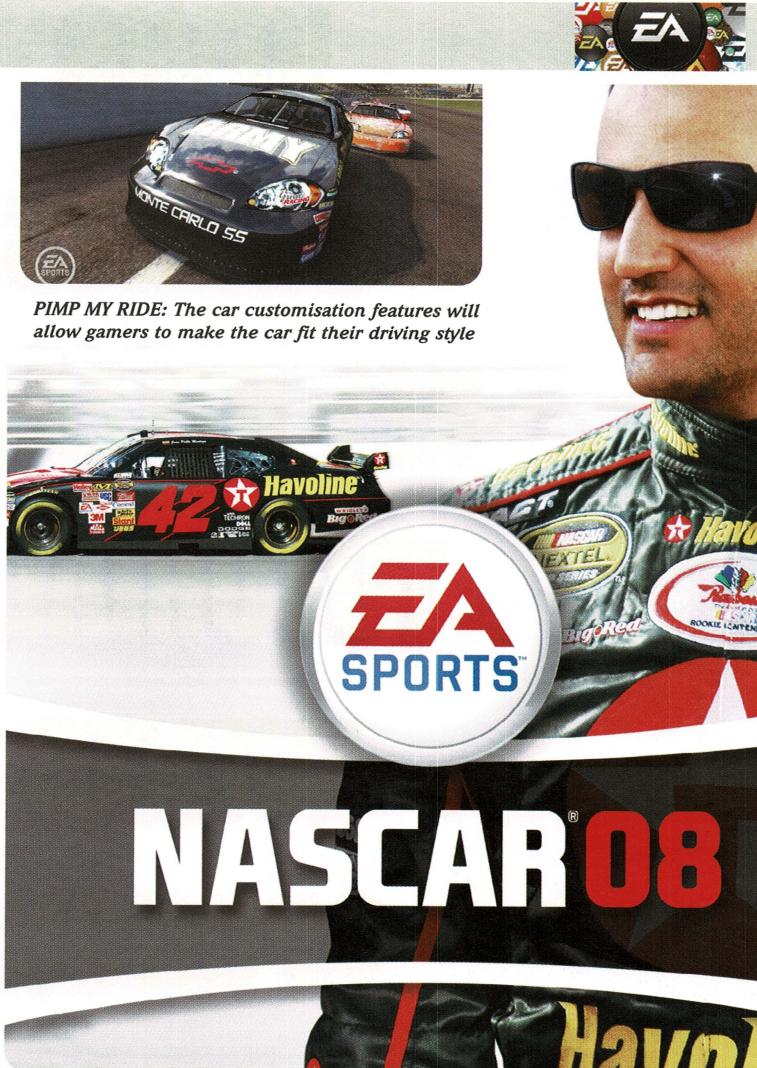
PUBLISHER: EA

DEVELOPER: EA TIBURON

PRICE: £39.99 (PS2), £49.99 (360, PS3)

DISTRIBUTOR: PINNACLE

CONTACT: 020 8309 3600



NASCAR® 08

RELEASED: AUGUST 10

FORMATS: PS2, DS

PUBLISHER: UBISOFT

DEVELOPER: IRONSTONE PARTNERS

PRICE: £19.99

DISTRIBUTOR: TRILOGY

CONTACT: 01932 578000

Dogs & Dinosaurs



TOP TRUMPS



Ubisoft will be hoping to tap into the generation spanning competitive card game with two new releases. **Andrew Wooden** gets trumped...

TOP TRUMPS has been giving the kids the simple pleasure of statistical boasting since the 1970s. Since its inception, scarcely any film, franchise, brand, sport or vehicle has been spared a translation into Trump form. Some argued the notoriously unpopular Kitchen Cleaning Products

series was a step too far. However *MCV* argues that snatching a win with the Extra Thick Bleach card's cleansing factor of nine is just as exhilarating as any other victory.

There's clearly plenty of life still left in the card game, with recent versions based on Harry Potter, *The Da Vinci Code* and Doctor Who still performing well at retail.

Subject wise, Ubisoft has gone for *Horror and Predators*, which will presumably see a something along the lines of a vampire taking on a tiger, alongside the slightly more questionable choice of *Dogs and Dinosaurs* – a balance of power which would appear to be decidedly one-sided.

Players follow Mat and Bex as they play *Top Trumps* to fill their card albums, take part in quizzes, find special cards and unlock hidden game secrets. Players can compete against the computer or against friends in single games or tournaments.

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HIGH STREET UPDATE

INDIE STORE FOCUS

This week AI Games reveals that Nintendo's slick marketing campaign is driving more and more people into the store to ask about the DS and Wii...



AFTER two years in business, Herne Bay-based independent games retailer AI Games is going strong.

How? Through a combination of exploiting the lack of specialist competition and solid retail practices, says director Paul Stannard.

"We're lucky in that we don't have an awful lot of competition. There is a Currys and a Woolworths nearby but their game ranges aren't that big. In fact, since we've opened, Woolworths have down-scaled its range – whether the two things are linked we don't know but we're not complaining."

"I think it is also down to us stocking a far wider range of titles and platforms. The Woolworths pretty much dropped Xbox and GameCube after Microsoft and Nintendo announced that they were moving onto newer formats."

And Stannard lists his most recent successes as largely Nintendo-based.

"The best selling console has to have been the DS. I wouldn't be surprised to

find that the majority of that demand for the DS is down to the brilliant adverts Nintendo commissioned for it. We've seen a lot more people coming into the store, people who we wouldn't normally have expected, asking about DS."

But it's not such a happy story for DS' closest competitor. "The PSP is

“

I wouldn't be surprised to find that the majority of the demand for the DS is down to the brilliant adverts.

**Paul Stannard,
AI Games**

”

performing pretty badly. It was doing pretty well after it came out but seems to have really dropped off recently. I'm finding myself having to sell the software below cost price to shift it."

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If you would like your indie store to be featured contact ben.furfie@intentmedia.co.uk

PRICE CHECK

HIGH STREET



Scarface
Vivendi, Wii

STORE	PRICE
GAME	£24.99
gamestation	£34.99
WOOLWORTHS	£29.99
HMV	£34.95
ASDA	£24.71

ONLINE

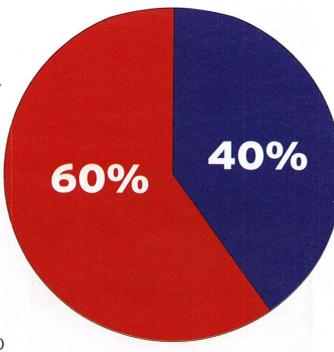
gameplay	£29.99
PLAY.COM	£29.99

WORD ON THE STREET

In conjunction with Channel Games, **MCV** poses a question to a number of High Street retailers every week...

DO YOU THINK PS3 SOFTWARE WILL HOLD ITS PRICE?

AS THE newest of the consoles on the market, PS3 has already seen some price deterioration (as is clear on *Virtua Fighter 5 in Price Check*, above). And this has left 60 per cent of retailers fearing that there is more margin-squeezing cuts to come as the console continues to build momentum. While the other 40 per cent are confident that they will be able to put their stock out at full price, online outlets and supermarkets might have something to say about this in the run-up to Christmas...



77 stores asked

FORZA MOTORSPORT 2

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For more information contact your account manager



Format: Xbox 360. Standard SRP: £44.99. Limited Edition SRP: £49.99.

XBOX 360

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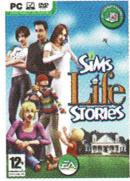
Sheffield



Overlord
Codemasters, 360



Virtua Tennis 5
Sega, PS3



The Sims Life Stories
EA, PC



Call of Duty 3
Activision, PS2

£39.99

£34.99

£29.99

£19.99

£39.99

£39.99

£29.99

£19.98

£44.99

N/A

N/A

N/A

£37.95

£39.99

£29.99

£24.99

£37.93

N/A

N/A

N/A

£39.99

£34.99

£24.99

£14.99

£39.99

£29.99

£17.99

£19.48

POINT OF SALE

A quick look at the point of sale merchandise that is promoting publishers' current and upcoming titles...



Shrek The ThirdActivision
DS Vertical Banner ■ DS Horizontal Banner ■ A2 Launch Poster ■
Cubes ■ PS2 Giant Boxes ■ Wii Giant Boxes ■ Mobile ■ Standee ■
A4 Sticker Sheet ■ Pop Up Standee



TransformersActivision
Standee 1 ■ Standee 2 ■ Posters ■ Poster 2 ■ OSDB ■ Cubes ■ V
Banner ■ H Banner



Anno 1701Disney
Posters ■ Sales Sheets ■ FSDU ■ Wobblers ■ Counter Tops

CHANNEL GAMES

All of the merchandise listed is available from Channel Games. For further
details, simply log on to its dedicated POS online store www.gamespos.com.

For all your retail, merchandising and POS requirements, please call Jonathan

Dunnott on 07812 353116, or email him on jdunnott@channelgames.co.uk

Bring my store

For more
information
contact

SALES: 0870 0270977
nindie.com

RETAIL ONLY INDIE CHARTS

PS3 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		NINJA GAIDEN	
		DEVELOPER: TECHMO PUBLISHER: EIDOS	
2	2	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX VEGAS	UBISOFT
3	5	MOTORSTORM	SONY
4	NEW	F.E.A.R.	VIVENDI
5	4	F1: CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION	ATARI

XBOX 360 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		THE DARKNESS	
		DEVELOPER: STARBREEZE PUBLISHER: 2K GAMES	
2	2	OVERLORD	CODEMASTERS
3	4	FORZA MOTORSPORT 2	MICROSOFT
4	3	COLIN MCRAE DIRT	CODEMASTERS
5	NEW	TENCHU Z	XXX

WII [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		MARIO PARTY 8	
		DEVELOPER: NINTENDO PUBLISHER: NINTENDO	
2	2	WII PLAY: WITH WIRELESS REMOTE	NINTENDO
3	1	RESIDENT EVIL 4	NINTENDO
4	NEW	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	EA
5	NEW	SCARFACE	ATARI

PS2 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	
		DEVELOPER: EA PUBLISHER: EA	
2	NEW	SHREK THE THIRD	ACTIVISION
3	NEW	FIGHT NIGHT 3	EA
4	4	POTC: AT WORLDS END	DISNEY
5	NEW	METAL SLUG ANTHOLOGY	ATARI

[ANALYSIS]

The distinctive tastes of the different consoles' fans are brought into focus by this week's single format indie charts. Eidos has a hit on its hands with *Ninja Gaiden* on PS3, whilst 2K's *The Darkness* reigns on 360.



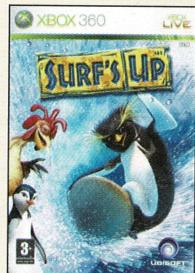
Charts compiled by Game Guide/Complete EPOS Solutions. For more information about Complete EPOS Solutions call 01543 370002. For more information about the Game Guide call 01606 836347.

RETAIL ONLY NEW RELEASES

Ubisoft Surf's Up a treat for retail

The latest big summer game-of-the-film arrives in store next week in the form of multi-format arcade title *Surf's Up*...

MUST STOCK

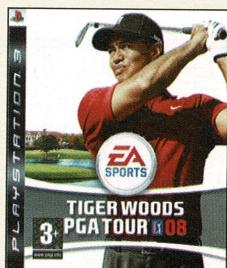


SURF'S UP

Released: August 3rd
Formats: 360, PS3, Wii, PS2, PSP, DS
Publisher: Ubisoft

After the dancing penguins of *Happy Feet* come the surfboarding penguins of spoof documentary kids' film *Surf's Up*, with Ubisoft on hand to make the game incarnation. Could it be this year's *Cars*?

Distributor: Trilogy
Contact: 01932 578 000



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR '08

Released: August 31st
Format: PC, PSP, PS3, 360, Wii, DS
Publisher: EA

Quite a week for EA come August 31st - alongside *Boogie*, *Madden* and *Medal of Honor*, there's the latest in the ever-successful *Tiger Woods* series for gamers to spend their cash on. Expect solid sales once more.

Distributor: Pinnacle
Contact: 01932 450000

TITLE

FORMAT

GENRE

PUBLISHER

TELEPHONE

DISTRIBUTOR

AUGUST 3rd

<i>Bob The Builder: Project Build It</i>	PS2	EyeToy	Blast	08452 344242	Open
<i>Thomas And Friends: A Day At The Races</i>	PS2	Eye Toy	Blast	08452 344242	Open
<i>Atelier Iris 3</i>	PS2	RPG	Koei	01462 476130	Open
<i>Singstar '90s</i>	PS2	Party	Sony	020 7911 8152	Centresoft
<i>MotoGP 07</i>	360/PC	Racing	THQ	01483 767656	Advantage
<i>Surf's Up</i>	360, PS3, Wii, PS2, PSP, DS	Surfing Arcade	Ubisoft	01932 578000	Trilogy
<i>Basketball Manager 2008</i>	PC	Sim	Xider	49 2131 765 01	Pinnacle

AUGUST 10th

<i>Gecko Blaster</i>	PS2	Arcade	Phoenix/Atari	01245 465690	Advantage
<i>Legend of Camelot</i>	PS2	Kids	Phoenix/Atari	01245 465690	Advantage
<i>Pro Biker 2</i>	PS2	Racing	Phoenix/Atari	01245 465690	Advantage
<i>Singstar Rock Ballads</i>	PS2	Party	Sony	020 7911 8152	Centresoft
<i>Top Trumps: Dogs & Dinosaurs/Horror & Predators</i>	PS2/DS	Puzzle	Ubisoft	01932 578000	Trilogy

AUGUST 17th

<i>Brain Buster Pack</i>	DS	Puzzle	505 Games	01908 607772	Advantage
<i>Chronos Twins</i>	DS	Shooter	Oxygen	01933 442660	Open
<i>Hard Rock Casino</i>	PS2/PSP	Gambling	Oxygen	01933 442660	Open
<i>Chicken Shoot</i>	DS	Action	Zoo Digital	01142 636030	Open
<i>Premier Manager 08</i>	PS2/PC	Sports	Zoo Digital	01142 636030	Open

AUGUST 24th

<i>Loki</i>	PC	Puzzle	Ascaron	020 8309 3600	Open
<i>Madden NFL 2008</i>	360/PS3/PC/PS2/DS/GBA/PSP/Wii	Sports	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>NASCAR 08</i>	360/PS2/PS3	Racing	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Pacman Rally</i>	PSP	Arcade	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Glory Days 2</i>	DS	Strategy	Ghostlight	01279 858000	Open
<i>World of Pool</i>	PSP	Strategy	Ghostlight	01279 858000	Open
<i>Tank Battles</i>	DS	Action	Midas	01279 858016	Open
<i>Singstar</i>	PS3	Party	Sony	020 7911 8152	Centresoft
<i>Bioshock</i>	360/PC	FPS	Take 2	01753 496600	Gem
<i>Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2</i>	PS3/PSP	FPS	Ubisoft	01932 578000	Trilogy
<i>World of Chaos</i>	PC	Action	Xider	49 2131 765 01	Pinnacle
<i>B-17 Fortress in the Sky</i>	DS	Action	Zoo Digital	01142 636030	Open
<i>Chicken Shoot</i>	Wii	Action	Zoo Digital	01142 636030	Open
<i>Hot Wheels Ultimate Racing</i>	PSP	Racing	Zoo Digital	01142 636030	Open

AUGUST 31st

<i>Dragon Ball Z: Goku Densetsu</i>	DS	Action	Atari	020 8222 9700	Advantage
<i>Tamagotchi Party On</i>	Wii	Party	Atari	020 8222 9700	Advantage
<i>Monster Hunter Freedom 2</i>	PSP	RPG	Capcom	020 8846 2550	Open
<i>Boogie</i>	Wii	Dance	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Madden NFL 2008</i>	PS3	Sports	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Medal Of Honor: Airborne</i>	360/PC/PS2	FPS	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Tiger Woods PGA Tour '08</i>	PC, PSP, PS3, 360, Wii, DS	Sports	EA	020 8309 3600	Pinnacle
<i>Dynasty Warriors: Fighters Battle</i>	DS	Action	Koei	01462 476130	Open
<i>King of Clubs</i>	PS2/Wii/PSP	Action	Oxygen	01933 442660	Open
<i>Medieval II: Total War Kingdoms</i>	PC	RTS	Sega	020 8995 3399	Centresoft
<i>Stuntman: Ignition</i>	360/PS3/PS2	Racing	THQ	01483 767656	Advantage
<i>Worms Open Warfare 2</i>	DS/PSP	Action	THQ	01483 767656	Advantage
<i>Cosmic Family</i>	Wii	Kids	Ubisoft	01932 578000	Trilogy
<i>Happy Cooking</i>	DS	Cooking Simulation	Ubisoft	01932 578000	Trilogy

AUGUST MISC

<i>Race Driver Create & Race</i>	DS	Racing	Codemasters	01926 814132	Centresoft
<i>Valhalla Knights</i>	PSP	RPG/Action	Rising Star	01462 476130	Centresoft
<i>Phantasy Star Universe: Ambitions of the Illuminus</i>	PS2/PC	RPG	Sega	020 8995 3399	Centresoft



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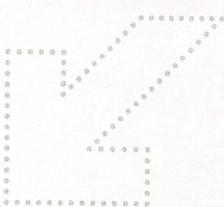
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RETAIL ONLY CHARTS



OFFICIAL UK CHARTS

NINTENDO DS [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		MORE BRAIN TRAINING	EA
		DEVELOPER: NINTENDO PUBLISHER: NINTENDO	
2	2	DR KAWASHIMA'S BRAIN TRAINING	NINTENDO
3	4	COOKING MAMA	505 GAMES
4	5	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF PHOENIX	EA
5	4	SHREK THE THIRD	ACTIVISION
6	6	NEW SUPER MARIO BROS	NINTENDO
7	18	BIG BRAIN ACADEMY	NINTENDO
8	19	NINTENDOGS: LAB & FRIENDS	NINTENDO
9	14	42 ALL-TIME CLASSICS	NINTENDO
10	7	TOUCHMASTER	MIDWAY

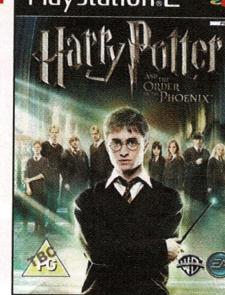
PLAYSTATION 2 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		TRANSFORMERS: THE GAME	ACTIVISION
		DEVELOPER: TRAVELLERS TALES PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION	
2	1	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF PHOENIX	EA
3	2	SHREK THE THIRD	ACTIVISION
4	3	TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY	EIDOS
5	4	SPIDER-MAN 3	ACTIVISION
6	5	PIRATES OTC: AT WORLDS END	DISNEY INTERACTIVE
7	7	MEDAL OF HONOR: VANGUARD	EA
8	6	GOD OF WAR II	SONY
9	8	BUZZ! JUNIOR: ROBOJAM	SONY
10	13	BURNOUT DOMINATOR	EA

PSP [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF PHOENIX	EA
		DEVELOPER: EA PUBLISHER: EA	
2	1	VIRTUA TENNIS 3	SEGA
3	3	GTA: VICE CITY STORIES	ROCKSTAR
4	NEW	TRANSFORMERS: THE GAME	ACTIVISION
5	5	METAL GEAR SOLID: PORTABLE OPS	KONAMI
6	4	PIRATES OTC: AT WORLDS END	DISNEY
7	6	300: MARCH TO GLORY	EIDOS
8	11	DRIVER 76	UBISOFT
9	NEW	SHREK THE THIRD	ACTIVISION
10	7	RAINBOW SIX: VEGAS	UBISOFT

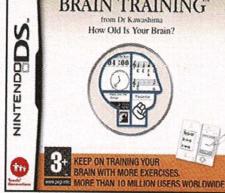
[1] PlayStation 2



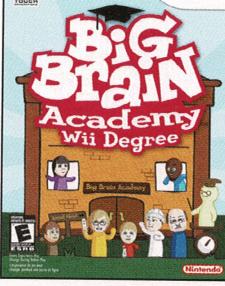
[2] Wii



[3] Nintendo DS



[4] Wii



[5] Wii



[ENTERTAINMENT - ALL PRICES]

TOP 40 ALL

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		HARRY POTTER: PHOENIX	EA
		FORMAT: PS2, WII, DS, 360	
2	NEW	TRANSFORMERS	ACTIVISION
3	2	MORE BRAIN TRAINING	NINTENDO
4	NEW	BIG BRAIN ACADEMY: WII DEGREE	WII
5	4	WII PLAY	NINTENDO
6	3	SHREK THE THIRD	WII, DS, PC, 360, PS2
7	8	THE DARKNESS	2K GAMES
8	6	DR KAWASHIMA'S BRAIN TRAINING	DS
9	9	COOKING MAMA	WII
10	13	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07	EA
11	7	PIRATES OTC: AT WORLD'S END	DISNEY
12	14	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX: VEGAS	UBISOFT
13	12	PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6	KONAMI
14	10	FORZA MOTORSPORT	MICROSOFT
15	18	MARIO STRIKERS CHARGED FOOTBALL	WII
16	22	NEED FOR SPEED: CARBON	EA
17	19	TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY	EIDOS
18	23	GTA: VICE CITY STORIES	ROCKSTAR
19	16	SPIDER-MAN 3	ACTIVISION
20	25	NEW SUPER MARIO BROS	NINTENDO

PC CD-ROM

[FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1		C&C3: TIBERIUM WARS	EA
		DEVELOPER: EA LA PUBLISHER: EA	
2	2	GHOST RECON: AW 2	UBISOFT
3	1	WOW: THE BURNING CRUSADE	VIVENDI
4	4	THE SIMS 2: SEASONS	EA
5	6	MEDIEVAL II: TOTAL WAR	SEGA
6	5	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	EA
7	12	THE COMPLETE COLLECTION OF THE SIMS	EA
8	8	S.T.A.L.K.E.R. SHADOW OF CHERNOBYL	THQ
9	7	CALL OF JUAREZ	UBISOFT
10	12	TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY	EIDOS

[ANALYSIS]



WITH Potter hype reaching a crescendo at the weekend, thanks to the arrival of the latest book, it was little surprise that EA's latest Hogwarts adventure remained at the top of the charts last week.

However, with the *Transformers* movie now on general release, Activision may well grab that top spot from its arch-rival - although it's up against some stiff competition in the form of *Pokemon Diamond & Pearl*.

Other than the *Transformers* game debuting at number two in the All Formats listing, the only other new entry in the charts last week was *Big Brain Academy: Wii Degree* at number four.

With the kids now on school holidays - and little opportunity for them to get outside - expect sales in general to enjoy a boost over the next few weeks.

Lisa Foster



FORMATS

■ Highest New Entry ■ Highest Top 40 Climber

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
21	11	VIRTUA TENNIS 3 PSP, 360, PS3, PC	SEGA
22	24	THE SIMS 2: PETS DS, PC, PS2, WII	EA
23	17	COLIN MCRAE: DIRT 360, PC	CODEMASTERS
24	RE	RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN PS3	SONY
25	15	RESIDENT EVIL 4 WII, PS2, PC	CAPCOM
26	30	CARS DS, PS2, PSP, GBA, 360	THQ
27	28	THE SIMS 2 DS, PS2, PC, PSP	EA
28	26	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007 PC, PSP, 360	SEGA
29	27	FIFA 07 PS2, PSP, 360, DS	EA
30	5	MARIO PARTY 8 WII	NINTENDO
31	20	FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER PS2, PS3, DS, 360	2K GAMES
32	35	FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 360, PS3, PS2, PSP	EA
33	31	WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007 PS2, PSP, 360	THQ
34	33	ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS WII, GC	NINTENDO
35	RE	MOTORSTORM PS3	SONY
36	RE	C & C3: TIBERIUM WARS 360, PC	EA
37	38	RAYMAN RAVING RABBIDS DS, WII, PS2, GBA	UBISOFT
38	RE	WARIO WARE: SMOOTH MOVES WII	NINTENDO
39	36	TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND PS2, PSP, DS, 360	EIDOS
40	RE	BIG BRAIN ACADEMY DS	NINTENDO

PC CD-ROM [BUDGET PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	RE	FOOTBALL MANAGER 2007	SEGA
2	NEW	CIVILISATION IV: BEYOND THE SWORD	TAKE 2
3	2	THE SIMS 2: H&M STUFF	EA
4	3	WORLD OF WARCRAFT	BLIZZARD
5	5	THE SIMS	EA
6	4	ROME: TOTAL WAR	GSP
7	6	PRAETORIANS	EIDOS
8	8	JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS	GSP
9	9	HOTEL GIANT	SOLD OUT
10	7	THE SIMS 2: CELEBRATION STUFF	EA

PS3 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	RE	THE DARKNESS	STARBREEZE
2	4	RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN	SONY
3	4	TRANSFORMERS: THE GAME	ACTIVISION
4	3	MOTORSTORM	SONY
5	1	NINJA GAIDEN: SIGMA	EIDOS
6	2	TOM CLANCY'S: RAINBOW SIX VEGAS	UBISOFT
7	7	FORMULA 1: CHAMPIONSHIP EDITION	SONY
8	11	RIDGE RACER 7	SONY
9	6	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	EA
10	5	VIRTUA TENNIS 3	SEGA

WII [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	RE	BIG BRAIN ACADEMY: WII DEGREE	NINTENDO
2	1	WII PLAY	NINTENDO
3	3	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	EA
4	5	MARIO STRIKERS CHARGED FOOTBALL	NINTENDO
5	6	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2007	EA
6	4	RESIDENT EVIL 4	NINTENDO
7	2	MARIO PARTY 8	NINTENDO
8	7	LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS	NINTENDO
9	8	WARIO WARE: SMOOTH MOVES	NINTENDO
10	9	SONIC AND THE SECRET RINGS	SEGA

XBOX 360 [FULL PRICE]

THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	TITLE	PUBLISHER
1	RE	TRANSFORMERS: THE GAME	TRAVELLERS TALES
2	2	FORZA MOTORSPORT 2	MICROSOFT
3	1	THE DARKNESS	TAKE 2
4	3	COLIN MCRAE: DIRT	CODEMASTERS
5	6	FLATOUT: ULTIMATE CARNAGE	EMPIRE
6	4	OVERLORD	CODEMASTERS
7	8	HARRY POTTER: ORDER OF THE PHOENIX	EA
8	10	TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX: VEGAS	UBISOFT
9	5	HOUR OF VICTORY	MIDWAY
10	7	CALL OF JUAREZ	UBISOFT

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SCEE's Euro president David Reeves has already promised 'fireworks' at the Leipzig event and his rivals at Microsoft and Nintendo will no doubt use the show to announce their Q4 plans, too. Thankfully, MCV will be there in force to provide all the news and analysis from this year's Game Convention trade and consumer exhibition.

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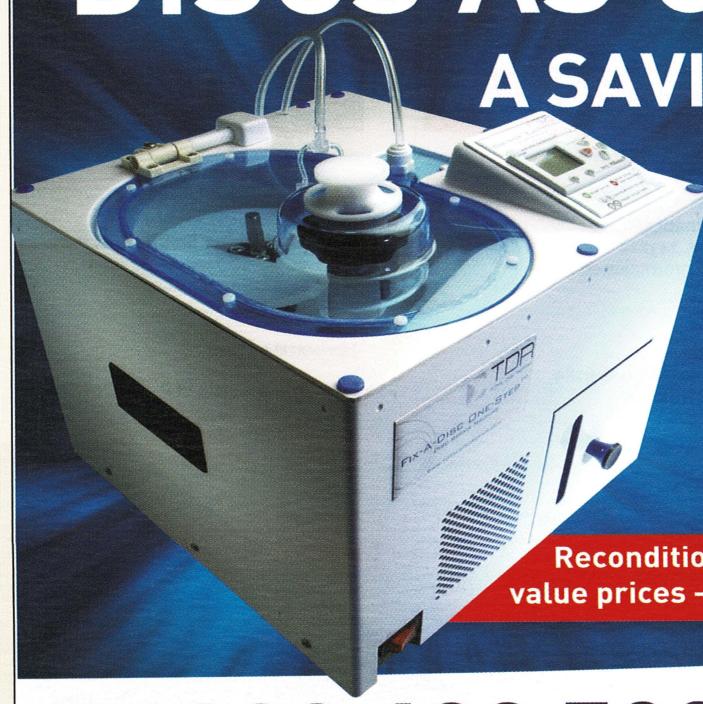
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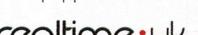
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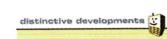


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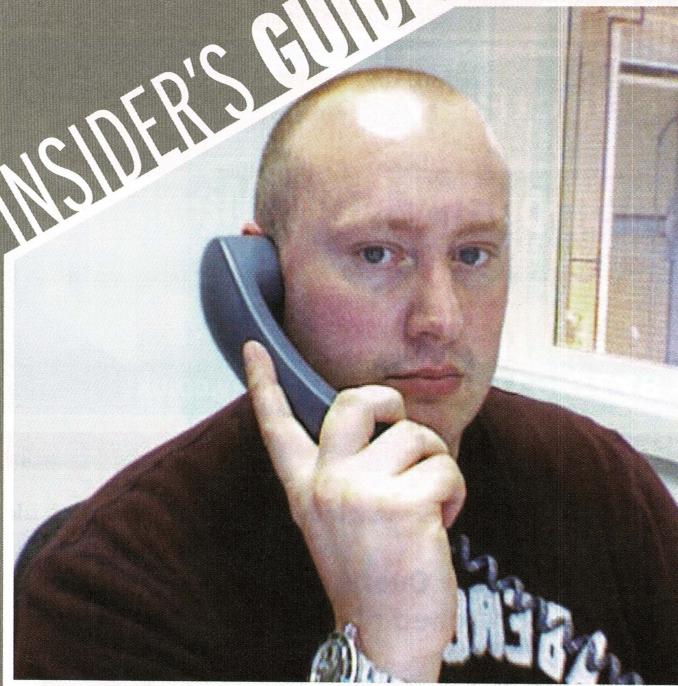
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INSIDER'S GUIDE



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How many staff do you employ?
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What are the biggest challenges your business faces at present?
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Are there any odd nicknames given to staff in your office?
Our sales director, Mick, gets called 'Cranium' because he has a massive forehead. It's so big that he says his mum used to cut the back out of his school caps just so they would fit his head.

Who's guilty of being the biggest office boozer?
Russell would be our office boozer. Here's the story...

We got Russell (director) drunk on a night out for his birthday.

Andrew (director) was being dropped off, he paid for the cab and

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CONTACT: PAUL HOLDEN (ABOVE)

told the cabbie that it would be okay to drop Russell off in the middle of nowhere.

As the driver was driving down a road surrounded by fields, he pulled over and told Russ to get in the passenger seat, so that he could give

I'm ex-police force and Mick Scaddan, our sales director, worked in tech labs for the military in the Middle East.

directions to where he lived. Russ got out of the car, the car drove off and Russ was stranded with no money and no phone in the middle of nowhere.

After walking a few miles, across fields and roads, he convinced a cab office that he wouldn't throw up in the back and that he had money at home to pay for a cab.

He also vowed to get revenge on Andrew – which still hasn't happened actually...

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LETTERS

The debate surrounding the new E3 continues, with one developer this week praising the scaled-down event. 1C's Darryl Still denies looking at the dancing girls in Santa Monica, while one irate reader hits back at MCV's comments about Slash. So, is the rocker really cooler than anyone or anything connected to the games industry? You decide...

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO **LETTERS@INTENTMEDIA.CO.UK**

E3: 'Stop the bitching'

I AM writing to counter some of the recent articles about the revamped E3 and to put a more positive experience on the table from a member of the UK games industry.

It would appear that a fair few people are having a little bitching session about the event (dare I say, because they weren't invited). But from our point of view – a small independent and recently formed games developer – this year's E3 was by far the best I have ever attended in terms of pure business development and networking.

Were invites required? We didn't have any and managed to fill our days with constructive meetings with potential US clients, and our nights with large quantities of Southern Comfort in the Britannia. We also didn't have to fight our way through crowds of bloggers to make ourselves heard during these meetings. Sure, the parties may well have been missed, but I am sure that those who missed the chaos of the Convention Center, the flesh of the surgically enhanced booth babes and the aural decibel

assault of god-awful music are in the minority.

E3 has and always will be a chance for non-US developers to make contact with potential worldwide clients who are all

E3 this year was a great improvement on previous iterations. Roll on E3 Vegas or New York in 2008.

in the same place at the same time. Sure, we didn't have to out-spend our competitors with a \$10m booth, but for developers there are substantial savings in arranging a trip to one place rather than a world tour.

I have also read concerns and complaints about the logistical side – it took 30 minutes to get from one hotel to another. Well may I suggest to our pampered marketing colleagues that their legs would have traversed the distance much quicker – and in pleasant warm sunshine. Let's face it, most of the hotels such as

Lowes, Shutters and the Viceroy were all within five minutes walk of each other, whilst the Fairmont was only 15 minutes walk away.

It would appear that as an industry we are never happy without anything to complain about. E3 this year was a great improvement on previous iterations and we are hopeful that we can garner some additional work from our meetings. Roll on E3 Vegas or New York in 2008!

Lol Scragg
CEO,
Cohort Studios

RE: Off the record



I SEE what you did there. Very clever.

Photograph me and Paul King on the 1C booth in the hangar, looking up at the monitors as we are demonstrating top-class 1C RPG *Kings Bounty*, pop it below a photo of a couple of dancing girls and voila! Looks like the fat boys are ogling the ladies.

No wonder you guys put your newspaper name in red at the top of your page! Three letters too. Next headline: 'Phew, what a scorching'?

You could have at least airbrushed out the double chins and wrinkles!

Darryl Still,
Marketing Director,

1C

REGARDING your remarks about Slash being washed-up, his last album with Velvet Revolver in 2004-5 sold three million copies plus, they played Live 8 and a serious world tour. The album won many awards and is considered a mainstream rock classic.

Velvet Revolver's new one went Top five in the US and Top ten in the UK, it's been well received by all, they seem to be playing arenas in the US and have been special guests at the Download Festival twice now. They've done some pretty large UK and European tours including one last month that was sold out. When I saw him last month being



interviewed he was happy, funny and thoroughly entertaining. He's worshipped by rock fans young and old and is probably coining it in – what do you reckon 10 grand a show, 43 times a week [sic]? Even in his 40s and without his former partner in crime

he's still cooler than any video game or indeed anyone and anything connected with the games industry.

Can I be washed-up like that please?

Jonathan Dytyn,
Former games retailer
and journalist

OFF THE RECORD

This week, THQ's Greg Jones teaches games journos a lesson in gullibility, an Intent Media employee feels the full Force of the Dark Side and Star Trek devotees are given something to keep their fingers busy. Elsewhere, MCV discovers the band that is giving the industry a soundtrack and pays a visit to Sony's Three Rooms...

THAT WAS THEN

MCV trawls through its archives to bring you the news and pics from yesteryear...



The great and good of the Euro development industry have been in Brighton this week at the Develop Conference. Launched last year, this jaunt to the coast is now established on the creative community's calendar - with the added thrills of the Develop Awards taking place at the same time. All rather different to the old Develop! Conferences (yep, complete with that irritating exclamation mark). These always took place in a dark, smelly room at the back of ECTS in Olympia. Here we see 3DO boss Trip Hawkins asking event organiser Cat McLean why no one came to his 1994 keynote. Mind you, no one bought the 3DO either...

[13 YEARS AGO: 1994]

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5. Super Mario Land 3	GA	Nintendo
6. Mortal Kombat	GA, GG, MD, SG, SN	Acclaim/Arena
7. Sonic the Hedgehog 2	GG, MD, SG	Sega
8. Cool Spot	GA, GG, MD, SG, SN	Virgin
9. Sonic the Hedgehog	GG, MD, SG	Sega
10. Starwing	SN	Nintendo

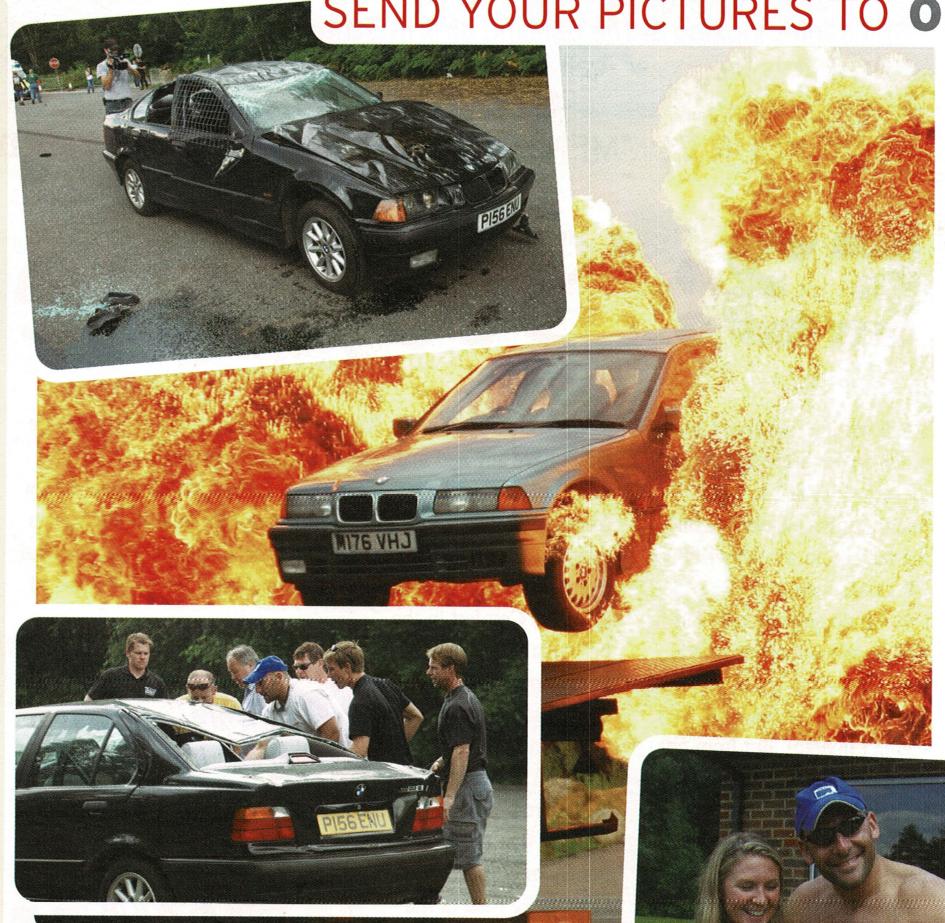
As it looks as though Warner Music Group is on the verge of acquiring *Sensible Soccer* publisher Renegade, Ocean buys a major stake in top-end games developer Digital Image Design (DID) - believed to be around 25 per cent.

[17 YEARS AGO: 1990]

AMIGA TOP 10

1. Italy 1990 Winners Edition	US Gold
2. Shadow Warriors	Ocean
3. Kick Off 2	Anco
4. Lost Patrol	Ocean
5. Flimbo's Quest	System 3
6. Damocles	Active
7. Red Storm Rising	Microprose
8. International 3D Tennis	Palace
9. Flood	EA
10. Unreal	Ubisoft

Mirrosoft pulls its *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* game from Commodore's Amiga bundle. Activision becomes the first publisher to be granted publishing rights for Nintendo's new-fangled Famicom console.



A CUNNING STUNT...

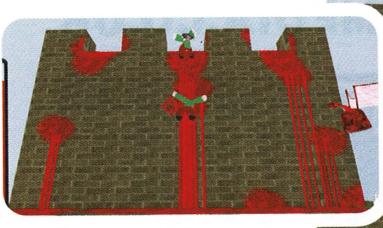
... and for once we don't actually mean that offensively. THQ's Greg Jones pushed the boundaries of PR as part of the publisher's recent promotion of *Stuntman: Ignition*. Not by placing himself in the above aflame BMW, you understand, but instead by merely appearing to - secretly switching places with one of the firm's hired real-life beefy daredevils (such as he pictured right, with a flustered Izzy Honour) at the last minute. When the German super-car landed on its roof, collected journos thought Greg might be in trouble - not least because of a collection of 'paramedics' and stunt experts rushed to his aid. A cruel hoax, maybe: but one we doubt any of the assembled scribes will ever forget. PR mission accomplished, then.



STAR WARS: A NEW CHOKE

Here's MCV's very own Ben Partitt indulging in all his Sith asphyxiation fantasies. The shockingly realistic Darth Vader teaching him a lesson was part of proud geekathon, the Star Wars Experience at London's Excel Centre last week. Thanks go to event sponsor Play.com for supplying the tickets.

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THE REAL KILL ZONE

As copies of *Manhunt 2* sit gathering dust in Rockstar's warehouse, it's nice to see that the internet can still throw up uncensored interactive sickness without a care in the world. The above images are from *People Shooter*, which was created by an indie UK developer. The aim of the title? To fill would-be suicide victims with lead before they take their own lives. Tasteful, we're sure you'll agree.



KLINGON TO WHAT YOU'VE GOT

Above you see perhaps the geekiest product ever known to man - a keyboard that allows you to type Klingon. Creator Cherry says it will 'aid communications between Earth and other cultures within the Federation'. Sadly, we doubt the same goes for *Star Trek* aficionados and attractive ladyfolk.

SAYWHAT

The key headline-grabbing soundbites from across the industry and the wider world from the past week...

"One of the objectives we gave to Phil Harrison is to make people cry."

David Reeves (right) tells the *ThreeSpeech* blog that the SCEA head of worldwide studios is set to make PS3 gamers emotional.

"An armed gang of four kidnapped one of the world's top RPG gamers after one criminal's girlfriend lured him into a fake date... They held a gun against the victim's head for five hours to get his password, which they wanted to sell for \$8,000."

A report on *Gizmodo.com* describes exactly how dangerous the



mean streets of the RPG world have become in recent times.

"We strongly believe that from the perspective of someone waiting for a game engine that Epic promised it would deliver almost two years ago, it seems pretty clear that *Gears* was built on the backs of the Unreal Engine licensees. We certainly stand by our allegations that instead of using our licensing fees to develop and support the Unreal Engine 3, Epic used that money to build *Gears*."

Denis Dyack, president and founder of Silicon Knights, after his firm filed a lawsuit against Epic Games.

"Steven respects games as a unique medium and understands them. When Steven Spielberg introduces ideas, they're always framed by an understanding that above all else, the experience has to remain interactive and it has to be compelling and fun."

Neill Young, general manager of EA Los Angeles, regarding collaborating with the film maker.

"Anything can be art. Even a can of Campbell's soup. What I should have said is that games could not be high art... Games tend to involve 1. Point and shoot 2. Treasure or scavenger

hunts and 3. Player control of the outcome. I don't think these attributes have much to do with art; they have more in common with sports."

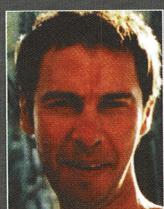
Film critic Roger Ebert infuriates the internet fanboys on his own website.

"I'm going to make it very clear right now. Google's involved in in-game advertising. We are not going to be a publisher or a developer or a portal for games at all. That's why we want to partner with you."

Google's Bernie Stolar makes it clear to delegates of the Casual Connect convention in Seattle that he's not in competition with them.

[TAG TOURNAMENT]

It's a personality column, but not as you know it. Each week the interviewee becomes the interviewer...



Simon Jeffrey

Job Title: Managing Director

Company: Empire



Martin Defries

Job Title: Managing Director

Company: Rising Star

What aspect of sharing a room with me at E3 did you most enjoy?

Tough one, there are many peculiarities to enjoy with your week long jet lag: waking me at 4.00am to see if I am able to sleep; asking me if I have a lighter at 4.30am; the daily emptying of all the mini-bar sweets; complaining of your diet while in the hotel; the rolling specialist interest TV channels you set up for the entire stay; your bountiful supply of tissues and wet wipes.

You have done a fabulous job of getting Rising Star games into the charts. Have you surprised yourself and how does it feel having finally to do a proper day's work?

Thanks for the compliment. It is evidence of great product and good partners. And it is damn hard work! You of all people know that it is often so that some do more behind the scenes and some enjoy the limelight. I am amazed that having recently decided to step out from the shadows, I've achieved more coverage than Garry Williams, Andy Payne and Simon Harvey combined!

NEXT WEEK: Martin grills Saitek's UK sales manager Paul Millar

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“

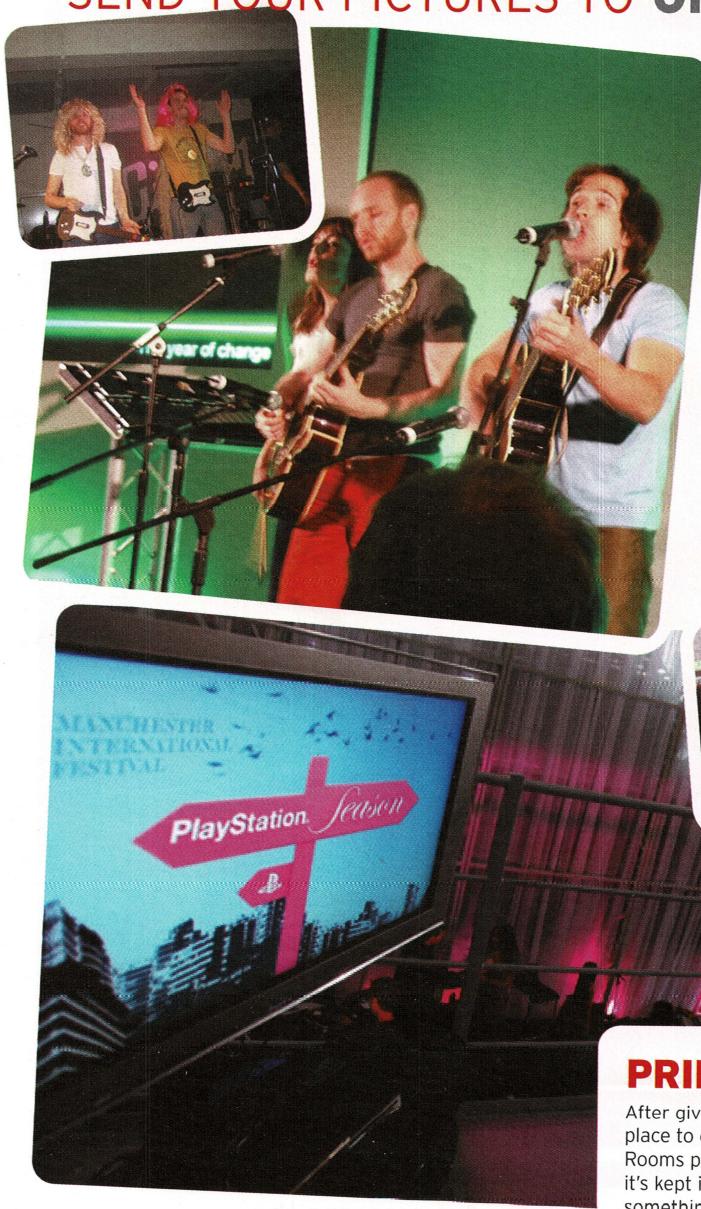
In terms of IP or development, there are lots of opportunities in Europe - perhaps more than in the US.

Joerg Trouvain, Activision

”

OFF THE RECORD

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SING STARS

Ladies and gentlemen, please give it up for the Hardest Working Band in games: The Hoosiers (Left). Not content with entertaining the assorted crowd at last week's Asda conference (who said rock and roll was dead?), the cheeky gurners then turned their attention to a *Guitar Hero* party later that week (inset). Expect to see them 'rocking out' at a LAN party near you soon.



PRIDE OF THE NORTH

After giving trendy Londonites a games-related place to chill, Sony has taken its über-cool Three Rooms project up North to Manchester. Nice to see it's kept its chic design - and can give the locals something to take their minds off the rain.



Thanks to the good grace of 2K Games, we have a bumper collection of *BioShock* goodies to be won by one lucky reader. Up for grabs is a Collectors Edition of the game, exclusive merchandise, Welcome to Rapture mailpack and a *BioShock* T-shirt...

Q. The name of the developer behind *BioShock* is?

A. Illogical
B. Irrational
C: Unacceptable

Email your answer to:
bioshock@intentmedia.co.uk

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Intent Media specialises in trade titles for entertainment and leisure markets. As well as *MCV*, Intent publishes *PC Retail* for retailers and suppliers to the computer trade, *Develop Magazine* for games programmers, producers and artists, *ToyNews* for all sectors of the toy industry and *Mobile Entertainment*.

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MCV

ISSN: 1469-4832 Copyright 2006

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MCV has an exclusive media partnership with
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